

14

Part I

Second Series

Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

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14 Part I



“So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the ‘third world’ as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. . . .the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.”

Indira Gandhi

**Selected
works of
Jawaharlal
Nehru**



WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL, 1950

Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Second Series

Volume Fourteen

Part I

(15 November 1949 – 8 April 1950)

**A Project of the
Jawaharlal Nehru
Memorial Fund**

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PUBLISHED BY

Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund
Teen Murti House, New Delhi 110 011

DISTRIBUTED BY

Oxford University Press
YMCA Library Building, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi 110 001
Bombay Calcutta Madras
Oxford New York Toronto
Melbourne Tokyo Hong Kong

PHOTOTYPESET AND PRINTED BY

Rekha Printers Private Limited
A-102/1, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase II
New Delhi 110 020

General Editor

S. Gopal

FOREWORD

Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the key figures of the twentieth century. He symbolised some of the major forces which have transformed our age.

When Jawaharlal Nehru was young, history was still the privilege of the West; the rest of the world lay in deliberate darkness. The impression given was that the vast continents of Asia and Africa existed merely to sustain their masters in Europe and North America. Jawaharlal Nehru's own education in Britain could be interpreted, in a sense, as an attempt to secure for him a place within the pale. His letters of the time are evidence of his sensitivity, his interest in science and international affairs as well as of his pride in India and Asia. But his personality was veiled by his shyness and a facade of nonchalance, and perhaps outwardly there was not much to distinguish him from the ordinary run of men. Gradually there emerged the warm and universal being who became intensely involved with the problems of the poor and the oppressed in all lands. In doing so, Jawaharlal Nehru gave articulation and leadership to millions of people in his own country and in Asia and Africa.

That imperialism was a curse which should be lifted from the brows of men, that poverty was incompatible with civilisation, that nationalism should be poised on a sense of international community and that it was not sufficient to brood on these things when action was urgent and compelling—these were the principles which inspired and gave vitality to Jawaharlal Nehru's activities in the years of India's struggle for freedom and made him not only an intense nationalist but one of the leaders of humanism.

No particular ideological doctrine could claim Jawaharlal Nehru for its own. Long days in jail were spent in reading widely. He drew much from the thought of the East and West and from the philosophies of the past and the present. Never religious in the formal sense, yet he had a deep love for the culture and tradition of his own land. Never a rigid Marxist, yet he was deeply influenced by that theory and was particularly impressed by what he saw in the Soviet Union on his first visit in 1927. However, he realised that the world was too complex, and man had too many facets, to be encompassed by any single or total explanation. He himself was a socialist with an abhorrence of regimentation and a democrat who was anxious to reconcile his faith in civil liberty with the necessity of mitigating economic and social wretchedness. His struggles, both within himself and with the outside world, to adjust such seeming contradictions are what make his life and work significant and fascinating.

As a leader of free India, Jawaharlal Nehru recognised that his country could neither stay out of the world nor divest itself of its own interest in world affairs. But to the extent that it was possible, Jawaharlal Nehru sought to speak objectively

and to be a voice of sanity in the shrill phases of the 'cold war'. Whether his influence helped on certain occasions to maintain peace is for the future historian to assess. What we do know is that for a long stretch of time he commanded an international audience reaching far beyond governments, that he spoke for ordinary, sensitive, thinking men and women around the globe and that his was a constituency which extended far beyond India.

So the story of Jawaharlal Nehru is that of a man who evolved, who grew in storm and stress till he became the representative of much that was noble in his time. It is the story of a generous and gracious human being who summed up in himself the resurgence of the 'third world' as well as the humanism which transcends dogmas and is adapted to the contemporary context. His achievement, by its very nature and setting, was much greater than that of a Prime Minister. And it is with the conviction that the life of this man is of importance not only to scholars but to all, in India and elsewhere, who are interested in the valour and compassion of the human spirit that the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund has decided to publish a series of volumes consisting of all that is significant in what Jawaharlal Nehru spoke and wrote. There is, as is to be expected in the speeches and writings of a man so engrossed in affairs and gifted with expression, much that is ephemeral; this will be omitted. The official letters and memoranda will also not find place here. But it is planned to include everything else and the whole corpus should help to remind us of the quality and endeavour of one who was not only a leader of men and a lover of mankind, but a completely integrated human being.

Indira Gandhi.

New Delhi
18 January 1972

Chairman
Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund

EDITORIAL NOTE

This volume, the first part of the fourteenth volume of the *Selected Works*, covers the period from 15 November 1949, when Jawaharlal Nehru returned to India from his American visit, to 8 April 1950, when the Indo-Pakistan Agreement was signed. During this period, the Constitution was adopted, the Republic of India was inaugurated and a Planning Commission was set up. India confronted the problems of financial stringency, shortage of foodgrains, devaluation of currency, influx of refugees, communist violence and a revivalist Hindu militancy. The United Nations had failed to solve the Kashmir issue, and India and Pakistan moved to the brink of war as the communal tension in the two Bengals reached unprecedented levels.

Concerned at the growing weakness of ideals in Indian public life, Nehru considered resigning the prime ministership and battling in a private capacity for their restoration. The crisis was partly defused when an agreement with Liaquat Ali Khan was reached for the protection of minorities in India and Pakistan.

As the documents of this period which are of relevance to our purpose amount to a very large number, we have divided the volume into two parts. This procedure is likely to become increasingly necessary in later volumes.

The Nehru Memorial Library has been good enough to provide access to the papers of Jawaharlal Nehru and other relevant collections. Shrimati Indira Gandhi made available to us a large number of documents in her possession and these papers have been referred to in the footnotes as the J.N. Collection. The Secretariats of the President, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet and the Ministry of External Affairs, the National Archives of India and the Press Information Bureau have authorized the reprinting of material in their possession. Much of it is classified and some portions of it have necessarily had to be deleted. A few items from the volumes of *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, have also been included.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.C.	aide-de-camp
A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
A.I.R.	All India Radio
B.P.C.C.	Bengal Provincial Congress Committee
C.A.	Constituent Assembly
C.-in-C.	Commander-in-Chief
C.I.D.	Criminal Investigation Department
C.P.	Central Provinces
C.P.I.	Communist Party of India
C.W.C.	Congress Working Committee
G.O.C.(-in-C.)	General Officer Commanding (in-Chief)
H.M.G.	His Majesty's Government
I. & B.	Information and Broadcasting
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.N.A.	Indian National Army
J.V.P. Committee	Committee with Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya as members
M.E.A. & C.R.	Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations
M.E.A.	Ministry of External Affairs
M.L.A.	Member of Legislative Assembly
M.P.	Member of Parliament
N.A.I.	National Archives of India
N.A.T.O.	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
N.W.F.P.	North West Frontier Province
P.C.C.	Provincial Congress Committee
P.E.P.S.U.	Patiala and East Punjab States Union
P.I.B.	Press Information Bureau
P.M.	Prime Minister
P.M.S.	Prime Minister's Secretariat
R.S.S.	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
U.C.R.W.	United Council for Relief and Welfare
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N.	United Nations
U.N.C.I.P.	United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan
U.N.E.S.C.O.	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
U.P.	United Provinces/Uttar Pradesh
U.P.P.C.C.	United Provinces/Uttar Pradesh Provincial Congress Committee
U.S.A.	United States of America
U.S.S.R.	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

THE INDO-PAKISTAN AGREEMENT
I. The Drift to Crisis

1. Major Issues in Dispute¹

I agree with you that we should adhere to our own plan. The first thing is for both Governments to decide and declare that we rule out the resort to war in settling any differences, whatever they might be, and that we propose to settle them by peaceful methods. This statement is certainly rather vague. But in another sense it is definite enough and should go some way in reducing the tension, which unfortunately exists at present. In fact it will be easier to deal with the various problems when it is realized by all parties concerned that the only way of settlement is a peaceful one.

The Kashmir question, as you have said, is in the hands of the United Nations and we can say nothing about it separately.²

So far as we are concerned, there is no Junagadh case³ or any case in regard to other States. Not only can it not be reopened, but there is nothing to reopen.

As regards the dispute over canal waters⁴ and evacuee property,⁵ both of these should first be considered on the expert level by representatives of both parties. Where there is no agreement in the end, we are certainly prepared for a reference to a tribunal or to arbitration.

1. Note to Secretary General, Ministry of External Affairs, 4 December 1949. J.N. Collection.
2. On 28 April 1949, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan failed to secure the approval of both the countries to its truce proposals. The U.N.C.I.P., therefore, on 28 August 1949, proposed that all points of difference should be submitted to arbitration. India rejected the proposal of arbitration because it amounted to placing the aggressor and the aggressed on an equal footing. Then the U.N.C.I.P. recommended that the President of the Security Council, General McNaughton of Canada, be appointed as the mediator in the dispute.
3. The Nawab of Junagadh, a state with a Hindu majority, wished to accede to Pakistan. By a referendum on 20 February 1948, the people voted by a large majority in favour of India.
4. By the Inter-Dominion Agreement of 4 May 1948, India agreed to resume the supply of Indus waters to Pakistan and Pakistan agreed to develop in due course alternative resources for water supply. However, without developing her water resources, Pakistan, claimed equitable distribution of the Indus waters. In August 1949, a committee consisting of the representatives of both the countries met on India's initiative to conduct negotiations for setting up a joint technical commission.
5. The Hindus and Sikhs who migrated from West Pakistan left behind 4,800,000 acres of agricultural land and housing property worth Rs. 5,000 crores. The Muslims who migrated from India left only 3,139,000 acres of land and houses worth Rs. 1000 crores. Negotiations with Pakistan on the repatriation of property and other assets left behind by refugees were deadlocked. The Government of Pakistan knew that any settlement of the issue would mean additional burden in the form of ready payments that would be required in lieu of the excess property in its possession.

As regards the claim that Pakistan assets are being held back by India, so far as I know, there are many claims on our side that Pakistan is not paying what is our due. These matters should also be considered on the expert level first and then, if necessary, by reference to some impartial authority.

All these questions should not come in the way of the declaration.⁶ If the questions can be decided without the declaration, no need for the declaration arises. It is in order to ease the situation between the two countries and help in creating an atmosphere favourable to the settlement of disputes, that we have made our proposal. As soon as the declaration is made, we can discuss ways and means of settling outstanding disputes, as you have suggested.

6. Nehru first put forward the "No-war" proposal in a speech in August 1949. On Liaquat Ali Khan complaining that no formal approach for a "No-war" declaration had been made by India to Pakistan, India made a proposal to Pakistan through diplomatic channels in December 1949. This was followed by a draft declaration, handed over to the Pakistan High Commissioner in Delhi on 22 December 1949, to the effect that the two countries would in no case go to war to settle any disputes between them.

2. Cable to G.S. Bajpai¹

For your personal information, relations with Pakistan deteriorating owing to complications following devaluation.² Pakistan put ban on Indian cloth in spite of agreement to purchase it.³ This does not injure us much as we have other markets available. Dealing in jute completely stopped. Considerable quantity of jute purchased and paid for by Indian dealers before devaluation and loaded on barges for transport stopped by Pakistan with result that jute deteriorating and barges lying unused.⁴ We have impressed upon Pakistan that this jute must be delivered

1. New Delhi, 16 December 1949. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. For three months trade between India and Pakistan had been at a standstill following a 30 per cent devaluation of the British pound in September 1949 and the Government of India devaluing the Indian currency to the same extent. Pakistan's refusal to devalue its rupee affected India's production and employment. India had now to pay 44 per cent more for Pakistani goods.
3. An agreement was signed between India and Pakistan on 24 July 1949, under which, among other things, India promised to export to Pakistan a number of goods including cotton textiles. But India had an adverse balance of trade with Pakistan in 1948-49, because of the unwillingness of that country to import cotton textiles and other goods from India under the earlier agreement. The agreement of July 1949 was also not honoured by Pakistan. On 12 November 1949, Pakistan placed India on the list of countries from which no import of cotton textiles was to be licenced.
4. Sixty thousand bales of Indian jute were seized by Pakistan while in transit from Assam to Calcutta through its territory. In the same category was the detention of five lakh bales of jute for which Indian merchants had paid before devaluation.

immediately. If any dispute about payment, matter might be referred to arbitration. All these developments leading to worsening situation and proposals for some kind of reprisals such as stopping our coal supply to Pakistan which would have serious consequences.⁵ Meanwhile, correspondence with Pakistan proceeding.

We are also proceeding with our proposal about joint declaration with Pakistan against war....

5. Coal supply to Pakistan had been suspended on 22 December 1949 only because of the non-delivery of the held-up jute. It had been promised that the Government of India was prepared not only to restore normal supply but to make good the short supply when the trade deadlock was resolved. India was supplying coal to Pakistan at a monthly rate of 1,50,000 tons.

3. To John Matthai¹

New Delhi

29 December 1949

My dear Matthai,

I have your letter of today's date.

I think you are right in saying that our views about economic matters differ.² Perhaps our approach is different. Indeed, it may be said that there is a variety of opinion and considerable difference among members of the Cabinet. We have nevertheless managed to pull together with more or less success, because we felt that this was necessary in the interests of the country. I am grateful to you for the way you have always tried to meet my viewpoint and accommodate me in so far as you could.

As I said at the Cabinet meeting today, I feel a tremendous burden of responsibility, as no doubt you do also. We have all to shoulder this very heavy burden and to face serious problems. We can only do so effectively, if we think we are doing something which, in our opinion, should be done. In the course of the next month or two, we have to come to decisions in regard to many vital matters. That is why I wanted fairly full discussions in Cabinet. These discussions are not over yet and probably we shall continue them. I have no doubt that all of us will try to find some way out to the best of our ability. I would not think of pressing you to do something which conflicts with any conviction of yours. All I would request you for the present is to allow these matters to be discussed fully and then

1. J.N. Collection.

2. John Matthai thought that Nehru was less inclined to stress production than distribution and was keener on industrial development in the public sector. He felt that the kind of Planning Commission which was sought to be set up would tend to reduce the importance of the industrial and commercial classes.

decisions taken. This may go a little beyond January 26th. Unfortunately I have got to go to Colombo, etc.

For sometime past I have sensed that the situation in the country is rapidly deteriorating. I refer more especially to the state of mind of the people and their faith in us. I have wondered if I could not be more useful in some other capacity than that of the Prime Minister. I know I can do very good work, if I go direct to the people, instead of sitting in a Government office. My mind has therefore been occupied with this thought and I cannot quite make out where my duty lies. I shall take no decision till January 26th is over. Whatever decision I may take then will naturally lead to certain consequences. I would beg of you to defer any final decision about yourself too till then.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. The Ordeal of West Bengal¹

Question: What is the latest information about the situation in West Bengal?

Jawaharlal Nehru: According to my information, conditions in West Bengal today are somewhat better than they have been in the past. All that we are reading about Calcutta are exaggerations of the situation. Calcutta is a very big city with the densest population in India, and if some incident, of not much importance, takes place in some corner nobody except a few in that part know what is actually happening. Only such small happenings or incidents are published in big headlines in the newspapers which make us feel that something very big is happening in Calcutta.

West Bengal has suffered more from partition and its after-effects than any province or any part of the country. The Punjab also suffered, but it suffered more in the sense of mass killing of people, while economically West Bengal had suffered more. The province has a heavy population, and after partition, it has become heavier. More than any province, West Bengal has a larger number of the lower middle class population, which suffers tremendously in the economic conditions of today. Consequently unemployment and scarcity and other factors have led to the present situation in that province.

Q: Would the World Pacifists' Conference² have any effect on the world situation?

1. Press conference, Nagpur, 1 January 1950. Based on reports in *The Hindu*, *The Statesman* and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2 January 1950.
2. In the last week of December 1949 pacifists from thirty four countries met at Santiniketan and Sevagram.

JN: I cannot say just at this time what effects there will be of this meeting, but no doubt all these efforts will have some effect some day and when time is ripe, I am sure, these efforts of pacifists will have a big effect. I believe that nothing becomes fruitful until the time is ripe for big effect. I think it will be a very good thing if India can make a substantial reduction in her expenditure on armaments and thus set an example to other nations. But to what extent, of course, we will have to decide after seeing the realities.

Q: You have once remarked that blackmarketeers should be hanged by lamp posts?³

JN: That remark of mine was in connection with the blackmarketeers who profited during the great Bengal famine. I said that with particular reference to Bengal, that those blackmarketeers who profited on the dead should be hanged by lamp posts.

Q: What steps have the Government taken to deal with blackmarketing?

JN: So far as the Government is concerned, any person found guilty, however eminent or influential he might be, should be proceeded against. Our difficulty has been that it is difficult to get legal evidence. Some of those who indulge in blackmarketing had such resources at their disposal that they managed to escape the eyes of the law, without leaving a shred of evidence behind. Unless the Government change the law completely and make a summary procedure, we can't succeed fully, but the difficulty again is of finding adequate evidence.

Q: What is your view about private control of broadcasting?

JN: I am opposed to the idea of private enterprise for broadcasting. The doctrine of State-owned radio is the best. I do not like the way in which the radio is being treated in the U.S.A. as a private enterprise. Radio should not be outside government control. It is too powerful a weapon for private enterprise. The proper course, I feel, is to do what the British Government has done for B.B.C. They have an autonomous corporation controlling the radio. I think that it will be good if the A.I.R. becomes an autonomous corporation controlled by independent public men.

Q: What is the Indian Government's attitude to Israel?⁴

3. See *Selected Works*, Vol. 14 (first series), pp. 19-20, 268.

4. India had stood against the partition of Palestine and the creation of an Israel State. But events had forced a division of the country much against the will of the Arab States.

JN: India will recognise Israel⁵ after having considered the various factors of the situation, including a settlement of the matters at present handled by the United Nations.

Q: What is your reaction to the propaganda against India abroad?⁶

JN: There is propaganda against India abroad to some extent. The mere fact that India counts, and it is rather an important entity in international affairs, leads other countries to prevent India having her full weight. While it is being done as part of the normal propaganda, I am entirely opposed to counteracting such propaganda by the same methods. Ultimately, the best propaganda is the work which we do in our own country. In August-September 1947, when the situation in India was terrible, there was the worst propaganda. Our status fell in the minds of the people abroad. We have to have some machinery to put across to the people, telling them the facts and what actually we are doing. An example of good propaganda in our favour was the way in which we solved the State question. This created an impression of our perseverance and strength.

Q: Will the Government of India's attitude to the Cape Town Agreement change if Pakistan drops out of the February 6 talks between India, Pakistan and South Africa at Cape Town?⁷

JN: Our policy has not changed. We are dealing with South Africa. We have been thus far in cooperation with Pakistan. If Pakistan does not fully cooperate with us, we are very sorry. But the question is between us and South Africa. We do not drop out. We are having this conference because of the resolution of the United Nations. We will see whether it succeeds or not.

Q: Is it true that the Communist Party has not been banned because of India's relations with the Soviet Union?

JN: Russia's policy has always been that they are not concerned with the internal conditions in the country. Officially, they are not concerned as to how we are dealing with our conditions.

5. India formally recognised Israel in September 1950, but did not exchange diplomatic representatives with it. Later, Israel was permitted to open a consulate in Bombay.
6. Pakistani propaganda in Britain and the United States had consistently followed the line that, as India was partitioned on the ground of religion, Kashmir, where more than 90 per cent of the population was Muslim, should be logically merged with Pakistan.
7. India and Pakistan were to send delegations to South Africa for discussions with the South African Government on the possible summoning of a round table conference on the status of Indians in South Africa.

Q: Can you explain your views on prohibition?

JN: I think that prohibition should be fitted in gradually into the state of affairs, without ignoring the economic conditions. One chief difficulty is that there is always a great danger of prohibition not being really effective in these circumstances. Once the law is passed, we have to proceed considering both the economic situation and the effectiveness of the step taken.

Q: Your comments on the demand for linguistic provinces?

JN: I know the issue of linguistic provinces is agitating the people in this province. The Congress has long ago accepted the principle of linguistic distribution of territory, and the J.V.P. report, of which I am a member, has laid down certain conditions. I assure the people that they will have Maharashtra province, but I cannot indicate any date at present. While considering this issue, a number of factors have to be taken into account. If there is disagreement among the various sections of the people, the matter has to wait. You must remember that the Government has to give priority to consolidating freedom and securing the stability of the country on a firm basis. Till then you cannot agree to divert your attention and energy to fresh problems such as linguistic provinces. After the Andhra province issue, a demand has been put forward for a Karnataka province,⁸ but the position is not so simple, for with it is linked the problem of Mysore and the Kannada-speaking population. I think this linguistic redistribution can afford to wait for a few years more until conditions have well stabilised themselves in the country.

8. The Karnataka agitation was for a united province including Mysore.

5. To Sri Prakasa¹

New Delhi
4 January, 1950

My dear Prakasa,²

...India-Pakistan relations are certainly pretty bad. I suppose we have to go through this business and live down our past *karma* in regard to it. I entirely agree with the suggestion you made in your letter to Rajaji that officers going from one place to another should inform the authorities of the other Dominion beforehand.³

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. Governor of Assam at this time.

3. Nehru instructed his Principal Private Secretary on 4 January to take necessary steps in this regard after consulting the Ministry of Home Affairs, which would involve informing Pakistan.

...I appreciate what you write under the head 'personal'. But I really see no way out for you, as for many of us, except to stick to our jobs for the present. I have no doubt that you will enjoy the confidence of the President, although the question is not of his confidence, but of the Government of India's confidence and that for the moment is represented by the Prime Minister...

Love,

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

6. On a No-War Declaration¹

Jawaharlal Nehru: Well, I thought the practice was that you should begin.

Question: Why not make a change, Sir, that you begin and we will follow.

JN: I am prepared to begin if you tell me on what subject I should begin.

Q: Obviously on your visit to Colombo.

JN: There is nothing very much to say about the visit to Colombo. All these conferences are so informal that they do not even have fixed agenda. Normally speaking, they discuss various matters, political and economic, each person giving his own general review of the situation. Anyhow, we are taking, all of us, a number of economic experts, and we will consider economic matters a good deal. I have no doubt we will consider political matters too, including new developments all over the world since we met last. But we always avoid taking any precise decisions by resolutions.

Q: Would Indo-Pakistan relations be considered?

JN: I should imagine not, so far as the formal conference is concerned. Of course, it may be discussed informally.

1. Press conference at New Delhi, 6 January 1950. File No. 43(102)/50-PMS.

Q: Is there any danger in the situation which is now developing around Formosa and the changed attitude of the United States Government to it?² Will our policy of neutrality be a governing factor in the ultimate solution of the problem in that part of South East Asia?

JN: Our policy of neutrality being a governing factor? I do not understand what you mean.

Q: Will our policy in any way influence the situation there, because it is a part of South East Asia and we are an important unit in South East Asia?

JN: I do not think our policy comes into that situation to any large extent. We must not exaggerate our influence all over the world. Of course in a small measure everything affects a situation. It is a little difficult to say much about Formosa and what might happen there except that it is rather a danger point. One does not know what developments will take place. It is a complicated situation.

Q: What is India's attitude towards developments in Burma?³

JN: Of course, we very much like peace in Burma and insofar as we can contribute to that need we should like to do so. But it is not our purpose nor is it proper for us to intervene in another country's affairs.

Q: To go back to the Colombo Conference, Sir, is it not reasonable to assume that the Indian delegates are taking with them a list of subjects in which they are interested?

JN: I will put it this way. We are taking with us papers on any subject that is likely to come up there.

Q: Are there any subjects in which we are particularly interested?

JN: Well, naturally there is a certain order of importance and priority of subjects. But when you go to a conference, you do not know what might become more important in the course of discussions.

2. It was previously believed that the United States was going to rescue Chiang Kai-shek and his National Government in Formosa. General MacArthur, the American Commander in Japan, was of this view, but the State Department had decided that Formosa was not worth saving. On 5 January 1950, President Truman announced that the U.S. would not send aid to Formosa.
3. Civil war and dacoity had spread over large parts of Burma.

Q: Does India propose to raise any issue on her own?

JN: Not in that way. But it just depends on the course the discussions take. We may raise some question or some aspect of a question.⁴

Q: What is your attitude to the Bao Dai⁵ Government?

JN: We have not recognised it.⁶ There is no question of recognising it—not Bao Dai Government alone—any Government in Indo-China. India's policy is to give no official recognition in Indo-China to any government, as authority there is divided. For the present we are just to watch developments there and let the people of Indo-China decide.

Q: Will India be included in the Commonwealth plan for the atom bomb? We read about it in yesterday's papers.

JN: I do not know what the plan is and I do not see what inclusion or exclusion means. We are interested not in the manufacture of atom bombs but rather in the scientific development of atomic energy for industrial development and for power. Well, that is a slow process which scientists will develop ultimately after some years, probably not immediately.

Q: The reference was to a report which appeared yesterday. It is stated that some sort of arrangement had been made between the U.S. and the U.K. by which the U.S.A. would supply atom bombs to the U.K. for stockpiling and that England would not produce atom bombs but would concentrate on the development of atomic energy for industrial purposes. Would India come in the picture in this stockpiling?

JN: I do not know anything more about it than what you have read in the papers. But certainly we are not interested in stockpiling bombs or producing them.

4. The communique published at the close of the Colombo Conference showed that the deliberations were mainly concerned with the spread of communism in South East Asia. It was decided to reject any proposal to oppose communism by military means alone, or by forming a pacific pact, and to depend mainly on the improvement of economic conditions. See also *post*, pp. 525-537.
5. (b. 1913); ruler of Annam, 1926-45; Head of State of South Vietnam from 1949, functioning from Hong Kong from 1950 and later from France till he was deposed in 1955.
6. In Indo-China, the Bao Dai regime existed on the strength of French forces. India maintained that the Bao Dai regime was not as representative of nationalism as Ho Chi Minh's party. In February 1950, Britain and the United States recognised the governments of the three Indo-Chinese States under the leadership of Bao Dai (now incorporated in the French Union) on the ground that the French policy had become liberal.

Q: You have given a very inspiring New Year message, "Work Hard".⁷ Would the Government of India provide work to every able-bodied man?

JN: Certainly, the Government of India would like to do so. But when I said "work hard" you must always remember the audience I was addressing. I was addressing young men and women of Nagpur University and I suggested that they should think more in terms of creative and active work rather than in terms of continuing as a debating society in after-life. But my main point, apart from the students, has generally been that the country must think in terms of greater wealth. Whatever policy we may adopt, whether the society is capitalist or socialist or something in between, everybody has to aim at the production of greater wealth. Without production we cannot go very far. The nineteenth century capitalist way of accumulating surplus capital was to extract more from labour and make that surplus capital available for the development of industry. Now, that particular nineteenth century method is not applicable easily today anywhere in the world because of a certain social consciousness that has arisen not only among labour but elsewhere too. You cannot make them work in that way, that is to say, it is not possible to reduce wages now nor have surplus capital out of the reduction of wages, because people are not willing to put up with that kind of thing anywhere in the world. If we cannot reduce wages, what are we to do. We have therefore to make labour more efficient, by schemes of rationalisation and better and productive machinery. It should be made more efficient, so that it should produce more, so that you may have a little more surplus capital. You can have more surplus capital not by reduction of wages but by producing more. That does not mean that a person who is working eight hours should work ten hours a day, but he should work more efficiently and in a more rationalised way and there should be a better type of machinery, etc. You may get some help, of course, from abroad in the shape of capital, but it does not go very far. It may help in the beginning. Ultimately we have to produce more and more, especially you have to think in terms of producing capital goods more; otherwise you would be dependent on others.

Q: Is your visit to Colombo to be utilised for discussing problems of Indians in Ceylon?⁸

JN: Not officially so far as I am concerned, because I am going for a particular conference which has little to do with Ceylon; Colombo just happens to be the venue of that conference. Naturally, we are interested in those problems and I may talk frankly to some representatives there, but I do not think that it is the proper

7. See *post*, pp. 255-260.

8. The new citizenship laws in Sri Lanka made it difficult for Indians to become citizens.

time or occasion for me to discuss with the Government of Ceylon any of the Indo-Ceylon problems.

Q: With regard to Formosa, you said it was a danger point. Could you explain what you implied by that?

JN: What I meant was that one does not quite know what might happen if a complicated situation arises. I did not mean danger point in the sense of war arising there. It is a matter which could cause a great deal of friction and tension.

Q: What do you say about the Four-Point Programme which has again been reiterated by President Truman?⁹

JN: I do not know the details, I think the object of this programme is to give technical aid to underdeveloped countries. I welcomed that when I visited America. I think advantage should be taken so far as it can be.¹⁰

Q: Would the funds be sufficient to help the underdeveloped countries?

JN: It is not becoming of us to complain that another country is not helping sufficiently.¹¹

Q: Will the funds, proposed to be made available, be enough to achieve....

9. On 20 January 1949, Truman announced his "programme for peace and freedom" in Four Points: (1) support to the United Nations and related agencies; (2) perseverance in the programme for world recovery, particularly the European Recovery Programme; (3) strengthening freedom-loving nations against aggression through regional security pacts; (4) a new programme for making the benefits of scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement of underdeveloped areas.
10. Nehru's visit was followed by an Indo-American Conference in December in Delhi, at which the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, George McGhee, explaining President Truman's Four-Point programme, stated that legislation would be coming up before the U.S. Congress for providing 45 million dollars as aid to backward areas. Of this "a substantial sum for technical assistance" was proposed to be allocated to India.
11. No direct economic aid was given to India, as was done in the case of many other non-communist countries. Protracted negotiations for a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation between the United States and India did not reach a successful conclusion by the end of the year. But it was made possible for India, by the support of the United States, to withdraw 100 million dollars, the full quota to which she was entitled, from the International Monetary Fund. The two loans which the World Bank gave to India had already been granted by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, for railway development and land reclamation. A third loan was under negotiation.

JN: You mean, they are not enough. Obviously, the more the funds the more effective it will be.

Q: The money given is not sufficient.

JN: It is not proper for us to talk about it.

Q: How do the Government of India propose to bring an end to the present economic war between India and Pakistan? The talk of war does not help to ease the situation in any way.

JN: I think I told you on the last occasion that we had proposed to the Pakistan Government, first informally and then formally, that we might issue a joint declaration stating that in no event should we have recourse to war for a solution of any problem facing the two countries. Such a declaration does not, of course, put an end to the problems which will have to be dealt with separately. But we did think, and we do think, that it creates a favourable atmosphere to deal with those problems. It removes tension to some extent. After that, if war is excluded as we want it to be, what are the ways of dealing with a particular problem? First of all, of course, always direct negotiation. Secondly, some kind of mediation or reference of that particular problem to some judicial tribunal. Those are the various methods of dealing with a situation and one or the other method will have to be applied to one or the other problem. Anyhow, the exclusion of war itself should remove fear from people's minds and make them look towards a peaceful settlement. We should always try for that kind of removal of tension in this way and not add to it.

Q: If we accept arbitration in Kashmir, does it preclude the necessity of holding a plebiscite?

JN: As you know, some kind of a limited arbitration has been proposed,¹² which we did not accept, and we do not think arbitration is suited to a case like Kashmir where the future of four million people has to be decided. You cannot ask an individual, however great he might be, to decide the fate of four million people. But there are other questions, for instance, the canal waters dispute, the evacuee property issue, which can be solved either by arbitration or by reference to a judicial

12. On 29-30 August, the U.N. Commission on Kashmir asked both the Governments of India and Pakistan if they would agree to arbitration by Admiral Nimitz on "the differences existing between them concerning all questions raised by them in the implementation of Part-II of the Resolution of 13 August 1948", and treat his decisions as binding on both. India rejected the proposal. See *ante*, p. 3, fn 2.

tribunal or to experts. In fact, many subjects can be dealt with that way. Already, as you know, there is some kind of judicial tribunal or commission dealing with certain boundary disputes between East and West Bengal and Assam.¹³

Q: You are in favour of some sort of arbitration only in regard to civil suits but not criminal suits.

JN: It is very difficult to refer a matter to arbitration because arbitration itself is not likely to solve the issue ultimately. It only helps to create some kind of a temporary agreement. But the underlying causes and the passions remain even after the arbitration.

Q: What is the progress after the declaration renouncing war was made?

JN: Well, the question of a joint declaration was formally put forward to Pakistan. There were some exchanges in regard to general principles involved, and ultimately they wanted it to be put down more precisely in writing. So we put it down more precisely in writing and sent it to them. We have not had an answer to that as yet.

Q: How long ago was that?

JN: I think the last time must have been two or three weeks ago.

Q: What was the precise communication sent to Pakistan?

JN: It is a draft declaration, which the two countries might make, renouncing war as between themselves saying that we will not solve our problems or any questions that arise by war but by other means, the other means being direct negotiation, mediation, arbitration or reference to some kind of a tribunal.

Q: Have you heard from People's China after its recognition by your Government?¹⁴ And may I know when your Ambassador is going there?

JN: We have not had any answer yet.

13. The judicial tribunal headed by Justice Bagge of Sweden, constituted by mutual agreement, was at this time arbitrating the boundary differences between East Bengal in Pakistan and West Bengal and Assam in India. The award published on 5 February 1950 gave little to either Bengal except minor adjustments of their boundaries.
14. The People's Republic of China was proclaimed in Beijing on 10 October 1949. The Government of India recognised it on 30 December 1949.

Q: When are we sending back our representative?

JN: When I have not had an answer, how can I say that?

Q: Will you kindly review for us the economic progress in India since we tightened up the economy of the country by way of economy measures and restrictions on imports?

JN: That is too big and complicated a question to be reviewed. Undoubtedly, our economy measures have helped in making our general position sounder. I think it might be said that there has been a slight, though marked improvement in the economic situation so far as the price level is concerned, and it is likely to continue. From that point of view there has definitely been an improvement. From another point of view, unfortunately we have had to delay a number of schemes that we were very much interested in. We hope that their delay will not be very great ultimately.

Q: How long will you take to decide something about the Trone Report? Of course, we have not seen it, but we are told it is quite interesting.

JN: The Trone Report¹⁵ consists of a very brief general survey of industrial conditions in India. Dr Trone spent about three and a half months in going to various parts of India, chiefly industrial parts and one or two of these river valley schemes, and gave his opinion about them. He pointed out certain defects that he noticed and made certain general suggestions in regard to coordination, prevention of overlapping, wastage and making industries more efficient. He has pointed out the fact, which you all no doubt know, that one of the chief difficulties is the low productivity in the industries and that until we improve the productivity, our industries, Government-owned or others, would not make good as they should. One of the causes for low productivity is due to the sort of persons employed in a concern. In fact, he cited one or two cases where practically half the staff could be dismissed and work would be much better and more production would take place as a result.

15. In his report of 4 October 1949, S.A. Trone recommended that (1) real authority about decision-making should rest with the local authorities; (2) ministers and senior officials should get first-hand knowledge of the local conditions through personal visits; (3) conditions of workers like housing should be improved; (4) basic mechanization be introduced especially in mining to increase the productivity of labour; (5) well qualified personnel be recruited for specified work; (6) work on projects be synchronized with the time of delivery of machines from abroad and availability of spare parts; (7) India become self-sufficient in industry for which development of steel and electrical industries was of prime importance. He observed that planning in India till then had been very unsatisfactory and "at best, it was provincial or departmental". He suggested setting up of a central planning body with experienced and qualified persons as its members to work directly under the Prime Minister.

Q: Was it the Government of India?

JN: No. As a matter of fact it was not, but it applies to the Government of India though not in the percentage. But then again you come across this difficulty: if you go back to the nineteenth century capitalist outlook you just retrench anybody you don't want, but you can't easily do that nowadays—in large numbers anyway—unless you provide alternative employment to the retrenched personnel. But the fact is that far too many people are normally engaged and their efficiency suffers. Possibly, one of the reasons for this overstaffing in war-time was the fact that profits and losses were very heavy. It did not make much difference to the employer to employ eight men or ten because the salaries to be paid to the extra men could come out of the taxes. Now those persons are not required so much. They should be given alternative employment. The question of increasing production is one of the problems that faces us now. But this requires some kind of planning—some kind of an attempt on an all-India basis.

Again, Dr Trone points out that production is low in some places because of lack of electricity, while in some other places there is abundance of electric power. It is conceivable so to organise things as to use what is surplus in one place, and it requires a good deal of planning. Of course, distances are considerable. That is the general nature of his report. There is nothing very secret or very extraordinary about it in the sense that it is being hidden from you. It only points out certain defects, lack of coordination, low output, lack of efficiency, lack of planning, etc. For all these reasons, Dr Trone has recommended that there should be overall planning.

Q: Would that report be released?

JN: I decided some time back not to do so. In the report there is nothing secret which should not be released. Simply because it deals, rather frankly, with some particular industries, we feel it might embarrass those industries.

Q: You were speaking of overall planning—could you tell us what you have in mind?

JN: There should be an overall planning and a planned outlook as between provinces, States and the Centre. Sometimes, provinces ignore what is happening in other provinces and thereby do something which they need not do. That type of duplication and wastage of effort should be avoided.

Q: Do you propose to establish a planning machinery at the Centre?

JN: It is proposed to have some kind of a planning machinery.¹⁶ In fact, the beginnings of that were thought of in a sense some months back.¹⁷ Planning can take place only with a proper statistical organisation. That is the first requisite. You cannot just plan in the air. You must have facts—not only existing facts, but facts from time to time—to check what is happening. So, we are going ahead with the organisation of the statistical organisation. We have a statistical unit in the Cabinet Secretariat. One of the first things that we are going to undertake, I hope, is something in the nature of sample surveys of our food situation, because we do not exactly know what the situation is. We based all our past estimates on reports from the *patwari*, a village official, and they are very unsatisfactory. So we propose to have what are called sample surveys, on a small scale and progressively on a bigger scale to know exactly what the food production and consumption, etc., are. It is much easier to frame a policy with those facts before us.

Q: Would you give us some idea of the extent of response to your appeal for the underground hidden money and the progress made in the direction of making it overground?

JN: It is difficult for me to measure whether and what underground money has come overground. You will remember that the Income Tax Investigation Tribunal has been functioning for some time. I have not seen any recent reports from it, but, generally speaking, it has not met with a good deal of success in investigating particular cases and referring subsequently their findings to the Income Tax Department, and that department going ahead with them.¹⁸

Q: The 32rd Session of the Indian Economic Conference called the economic programme of the Government of India a healthy mass of inconsistencies and suggested the setting up of a Planning Commission. Would the Government as a responsible government listen to the timely advice of disinterested economists and take some action in the matter?

16. On 28 February 1950, a Planning Commission was set up with Nehru as chairman. It was asked to survey the material, capital, and human resources of the country, fix priorities, formulate a plan and report on its implementation. After fifteen months, a draft plan was produced in July 1951.
17. In January 1948, the Economic Programme Committee of the Congress, under Nehru's leadership, had set down the broad lines of policy: nationalisation of public utilities and all defence and key industries; public ownership of monopolies; the ending of the managing agency system as early as possible; and a maximum profit of 5 per cent for capital ventures.
18. Up to the end of January 1950, the Income Tax Investigation Commission disposed of 116 cases. A concealed income of Rs.33,100,000 was detected. The tax to be levied on this income was estimated at about Rs.22,500,000.

JN: Whatever you may call it, almost everyone nowadays talks about a planning authority, a planning commission, almost everybody talks about planning and that is almost common ground.

Q: You said that there was some difficulty in procuring legal evidence and that came in the way of combating blackmarketing.

JN: I am often reminded of a remark I made years ago about hanging black-marketeers on the nearest lamp-posts. What I had said was in the context of the Bengal famine. I said that the blackmarketeers who had profited by the Bengal famine, and in a sense contributed to the death of thousands of people in this way should be hanged. But, generally speaking, obviously, we want to proceed as rigorously as possible against blackmarketeers. The difficulty comes in about the normal legal procedure and securing legal evidence. It is, perhaps, not difficult to catch petty blackmarketeers without too great resources and intelligence, but in regard to those who have resources and who cover up their tracks, obviously it is much more difficult to catch them. It often happens that people complain of blackmarketing frequently and when we ask them to give their evidence, they can produce nothing very definite or precise except a general impression. It is very difficult to proceed on impressions. One knows that there are blackmarketeers but either you follow some procedure of law or you proceed outside that. If one does that, then it is possible that you might reduce blackmarketing, but you may have some other evils cropping up which are equally dangerous.

Q: Can't you adopt some process of law for blackmarketeers as you have for those persons who endanger public safety like the communists and other undesirable elements?

JN: As I said, so far as communists or other elements are concerned, we have tried to proceed on the basis of some kind of activities, not on the basis of theory or ideology. Violence has been the test.¹⁹ In regard to blackmarketeers, violence cannot be the test. Many things, perhaps worse than violence, may come in there, but it is very difficult to draw a line. Once you do that, you must remember that one of the things so much protested against and rightly so, is that police and their interference in private lives may become so much that there will be a tremendous hullabaloo about it.

19. At its second Congress held in Calcutta in February 1948, the Communist Party of India adopted a policy of securing the overthrow of the Congress Governments at the Centre and in the provinces by violent means. The communists then organised strikes and incited violence in cities and in some rural areas like Telengana in Hyderabad State. The Government of India banned the C.P.I. and arrested its leaders.

Q: But even definite cases have been dropped. In your correspondence with Dr B.C. Roy, you referred to a very big case. We do not know what happened to that.

JN: I do not know which case you mean.

Q: There was a very big case about which a complaint had been made to you by the J.C. Gupta²⁰ group and you had referred to it in your correspondence with Dr B.C. Roy. Names were not given in the correspondence which was released to the press.

JN: I do not remember but there was one group of cases²¹ dealing with a private organisation connected with supplies in which the Government of Bengal appointed a commission of enquiry and took some steps too. The other was a case²² in which there had been some blackmarketing and the representative of a big firm had been reported against. The matter itself was a small one but it was cloth which was allotted to Assam and was being sold in Calcutta. In that matter, an inquiry was made and it was reported to us that it was a *bona fide* error and some kind of permission had been given by some authority for that cloth to be diverted here, because it could not be sold in Assam, and the case was thereupon not proceeded against. What I said in my report was that although it might be a *bona fide* error, all such cases should normally go to a court and let the court decide rather than the executive authority.

Q: On this policy about blackmarketeers, can it not be rightly said that while you have a very deep sentiment against blackmarketeers, some people in the Cabinet are not so very particular about that, and they want to handle them in a different way.

JN: Surely, that cannot be said. Whether in the Cabinet or outside, nobody wants to handle them in a different way. There may be differences in the sense that some

20. J.C. Gupta was a dissident in the Bengal Congress who made several charges against the Bengal ministry. Roy being in Europe from June to September 1949, N.R. Sarkar, the acting Prime Minister of the province, forwarded the allegations to Nehru and later released to the press the allegations, and the explanations of the Provincial Government along with Nehru's comments.

21. This referred to the prosecution against a well-known Indian firm being dropped at the instance of the Premier, although the Anti-Corruption Department had enough evidence, and the head of the Anti-Corruption Department being insulted and taken to task and ultimately transferred as he had insisted on the prosecution.

22. This charge referred to the dropping of investigation in a case of blackmarketing in cloth by a police officer from the Central Government at the intervention of the Premier.

people may like to adopt extra-legal methods. Everybody agrees that the strongest steps should be taken. But some are afraid that, if you go outside the normal procedure, it will create difficulties and give rise to new problems of police oppression, etc., and it becomes dangerous. Take a case like the Godse trial. Here is a trial which goes on for a year and a half. Much expenditure is involved. It is quite possible that in some other countries the whole case might have been decided within two or three weeks. There was no doubt about the fact of his crime, but we started off with a conspiracy case and all the complicated legal procedure and appeals had been gone through and so it dragged on for a year and a half. We were particularly careful about that, because we wanted to show that every kind of legal facility would be given.

Q: Apart from blackmarketing, can we take it that there will be no question of showing any special concession to the tax evaders by putting them on a basis of equality with lawful tax-payers?

JN: There is no question of concession. In the case of the Income Tax Investigation Tribunal, the procedure is that the Tribunal enquires into a case and comes to the conclusion that a certain part of the income was not disclosed and was not taxed. It then reports to the Income Tax Department, which realises the tax. In these cases, unless there is something special, we do not take any criminal action, because for a variety of reasons it is not easy to do so. But of course if any particular case comes up necessitating further action it will be taken.

Q: May I take it that there is no question of winding up the commission or withdrawal of cases already referred to the commission?

JN: No, no, not at all.

Q: There is some proposal in respect of certain cases not to refer to the commission. What about them?

JN: You are right. The Finance Minister also referred to it in the Assembly. Well, I am sorry there has been such delays. I just cannot give you any precise answer. So many legal difficulties were pointed out from time to time that just when we were going to come to some conclusion some legal difficulty cropped up which required fresh examination.

Q: At a recent press conference you were reported to have said that the situation in Calcutta had improved. Was that impression based on reports from the West Bengal Government?²³

23. See *ante*, pp. 6-9.

JN: Normally, we proceed on reports from the provincial governments as well as on reports from the Central Government. As a whole, I think, it will be correct to say that the situation has improved, although there has been a worsening of conditions in certain areas in the last few days, as you must know. One is apt to get a wrong picture, a wrong perspective about the situation in Calcutta. A big majority of people living in Calcutta probably do not know anything about all incidents—or very little things are flashed in the newspapers. By reading these one gets a wrong perspective. It is quite true that lately there have been two or three bad cases.²⁴

Q: Was the recent outlawing of seven organizations²⁵ by the Bengal Government done with the consent of the Central Government?

JN: I am not quite sure about it. The fact is that the activities of these bodies were repeatedly considered, because they were found to be at the back of a number of troubles that have been happening. Whether any precise consultation was done, I cannot answer you without further enquiry. The matter has been considered and trouble-makers have been found taking shelter under these bodies and functioning through them.

Q: The communists in Calcutta are threatening that on 26 January people would come out at the risk of their own lives. Is the Government of India aware of it?

JN: Well, chiefly at the risk of others' lives.

Q: Will it not be true to say that this communist trouble or rather this lawlessness in Calcutta is due more to economic than political factors?

JN: You can trace almost every trouble ultimately to economic factors, although the immediate trouble may be due to political reasons. Unless it is tied on to economic reasons it cannot take place or go far. Now, West Bengal, as a province, has suffered more in recent years than any part of India, including, if I may say so, the Punjab after the partition. The Punjab had a terrible bloodbath. Nevertheless, the continuous pressure of problems on West Bengal is greater. It is a very heavily

24. On 26 October, several incidents of firing by private individuals, arson, looting of property and robbery were reported. On 10 November, the police used tear gas and carried out lathi-charges to disperse violent mobs. In late November and December, incidents of bomb-throwing at police pickets were reported.

25. Seven communist-dominated student and labour organisations in West Bengal were banned on 4 January 1950 as they had been reported to have interfered in the law and order situation of the province.

populated area and the addition of two million of people from East Bengal added to its trouble. Something that is different from the Punjab is that the main troubles of Bengal are more of middle class troubles than pertaining to other classes. Bengal has got a much large proportion of lower middle class unemployed added by the influx from East Bengal, which has been largely middle class also, and they do not easily fit in. In the Punjab the proportion is relatively less. The system of education in Calcutta produces a large number of educated people with degrees belonging to the middle or lower middle classes. We cannot possibly provide employment services for such a vast number. They can only be employed in productive occupations. But they have not received that training. Of course, it is not their fault. If given the training and opportunity, they will fare well. This has created an acute problem for the West Bengal Government.

Q: Could you not close colleges in Calcutta?

JN: Nobody is going to close the colleges in Calcutta, but it is desirable, apart from the basic educational approach, if students were spread out in more colleges elsewhere. They are so crowded that education suffers, they get no occupation, no personal attention. They attend lecture-halls, occasionally listening to lectures, and for the rest think in terms of getting through examinations. That is a very bad system of education.

Q: (In Urdu about overpopulation of India.)

JN: In this matter, I have no doubt that the press can help a lot in laying stress on the fact that the growth of population should be restricted as far as possible.

Q: You said the other day that India is not overpopulated.

JN: What is your test of overpopulation? I said, taken as a whole, India is not overpopulated, but parts of India are overpopulated. Some of you may have read Professor Mahalanobis' address at the Science Congress. He is an expert statistician in regard to population problems and he has pointed out that in India, as it is, from the point of view of food, etc., the population is bearing down heavily. That is true and I have no doubt in my mind that we can increase our food supplies not only to meet the present situation but any situation that may arise from the growth of population in the next 10 or 15 years. Looking at the country's present resources, there is no doubt that if population is very heavy, standards are lowered thereby. They have enough to eat but they can't have much elbow room to grow. Therefore, it is desirable from that point of view to keep down population.

Q: What is your opinion on the linguistic provinces. Has your attention been drawn to the resolution of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee about the protest made by the Canarese people of the Bellary district?

JN: I know. So far as Hyderabad is concerned, ultimately at some time or other the people of Hyderabad themselves will have to decide the future of their homeland. But so far as we, that is the Government of India, are concerned, we think it is highly undesirable at this stage to split up Hyderabad for carving out linguistic provinces. Whatever ultimately might happen splitting up would create a large number of new and difficult problems. Therefore, it should, in our opinion, continue as a unit at least for some time to come.

So far as the Andhra demand is concerned, our position is that we have agreed to the creation of an Andhra Province.²⁶ Now that we have agreed to that principle which has been accepted, the sooner it is done the better because it just creates more argument and trouble if there is delay. Let them do it, and we don't wish to delay the formation of the province by a day. At the same time, one can't take such a big step without thinking about all the possible consequences, more specially financial. We don't want suddenly to be caught up in something which involves large sums of money and either the Madras Province or the Tamil Nadu or Andhra or the Centre having to face the contingency of having to pay crores and crores to somebody. So, that has to be examined; some other factors have to be examined too. As soon as that is done we want to go ahead.

Q: What is the policy of the Government regarding splitting up of Vindhya Pradesh?

JN: As you know Vindhya Pradesh has been made into a Chief Commissioner's Province as a whole, as a unit. No other decision has been taken. How long that decision will last, I don't know, but it will last for some time. There is going to be no change about it in the near future.

26. On 1 January 1950, complete agreement on all issues raised by the Government of India on the formation of the Andhra Province was reached by the eight-member Partition Committee at Madras and approved by the Madras Cabinet on 4 January 1950. The Partition Committee set up in November 1949 by the Central Government recommended that Andhra Province be formed before the inauguration of the Republic. In fact, the new State came into existence only on 1 October 1953.

Q: There is a general impression that the Government wants to disintegrate Vindhya Pradesh because the Socialists are quite powerful there and because the Government thinks that by splitting up Vindhya Pradesh they will be able to reduce the strength of the Socialist Party in the whole of Vindhya Pradesh. Is it true?

JN: As a matter of fact, this is the first time I have heard of it. I am not aware of this particular argument that you have mentioned referred to anywhere, either in Government or outside.

Q: Some people from Vindhya Pradesh have come here and they were saying that...

JN: Have you heard of it before?

Q: No.

JN: There are three factors in it. First, the people of Vindhya Pradesh themselves; what do they want? Then the neighbouring two provinces of C.P. and U.P. There is no agreement among all the three.

Q: Do you think that an Andhra Province will be brought into being by January 26?

JN: That I cannot definitely say because apart from the financial and other matters, another difficulty is those districts of Bellary and others where the Karnatak people come in. They are objecting very strongly. So, whether all these difficulties can be disposed of in the course of the next few days is rather doubtful.

Q: In the same context there is one other danger. Recently the Partition Committee, in their proceedings, have noted about the search for Telugu officers to be posted to Telugu districts....

JN: Yes, I know there is the service difficulty too.

Q: You referred to a marked improvement in the economic situation—will it be possible to amplify it?

JN: Obviously I cannot give you facts and figures. The trend of cost of living index numbers and a general stabilisation of the position show that there is a marked improvement in the economic situation.

Q: We have had no news for some time about the position of Indians in Malaya.²⁷ Is the Government satisfied with the policy followed by the British Government in Malaya?

JN: In such cases no news might generally be interpreted as good news. There is no question of Government being satisfied about it, but nothing very special has happened recently.

Q: Having recognised Communist China does India intend to recognise Communist China's suzerainty over Tibet?

JN: The old policy of India under British rule was recognition of the autonomy of Tibet and, vaguely, recognising the suzerainty of China over Tibet, subject to that autonomy.²⁸ It is all rather vague in the sense that is not precisely put down. There is a certain treaty—I forget the year now—which laid down this policy and which was not finally, I think, signed by China. It remained in the air so far as China was concerned. We accepted it and Tibet also accepted it. So that you have to take the two together—that is, that there is a certain autonomy of Tibet and a vague suzerainty of China attached to it. But conditions have changed a lot since then. The real question that arises, I suppose, is Tibet's international relations. I do not suppose that the present Chinese Government wants to deprive Tibet of local autonomy. At any rate they say they do not wish to deprive it. But how far Tibet can have relations with other countries, I do not know.

Q: What is the status of Tibet? Has she any diplomatic status?

JN: It has a definite diplomatic status. Our representative there—I do not know what he is called—definitely deals with the Tibetan authorities.

Q: Is the treaty between India and the United States to be finalised? Will it include any loan on a governmental level?

27. Indians in Malaysia were troubled by political disturbances in the country. The European planters in Malaysia were not well disposed towards the Indians who were a politically conscious group and could resist continued exploitation of cheap labour. There were 246 Indians in detention.
28. In 1914, Chinese, Tibetan and British representatives at Shimla initialled a draft agreement on the basis of Tibetan autonomy subject to nominal Chinese suzerainty. But, while expressly admitting Tibetan autonomy, the Chinese failed to ratify the agreement.

JN: I cannot say when it will be finalised, but surely a treaty will not contain any reference to a loan.²⁹ A treaty is a general one and it is on the basis of the treaty that a loan may come in.

Q: Consequent to the recent transfer of power to Vietnam, have the Government of India received any request from that Government for recognition?

JN: I am not quite sure if any formal request was made, but certainly some kind of informal approaches have taken place. But as I have stated before our policy is not to give official recognition in Indo-China to any Government.

Q: What do you mean by any Government, Sir? Surely you will ultimately recognise some Government?

JN: No, because parts of Indo-China are under one authority, and parts are under another authority.

Q: What is the representative of Indo-China doing here in Delhi?

JN: Representative of Indo-China? Meaning?

Q: Vietnam, Sir.

JN: What Vietnam? The name is used in two ways.

Q: Bao Dai's representative, Sir.

JN: I do not know, He is here in his unofficial capacity, I suppose. He does not officially represent anybody to us.

Q: How long is he going to stay here?

JN: Well, just as long as he likes. Whatever he wants to do, he has come here in his private capacity and officially he is not accredited to us, nor do we recognise him in any official capacity.

29. In fact, Nehru's visit had not resulted in any immediate large scale help to India, and by the end of 1950, all that India received was only \$ 4.5 million in economic aid which compared unfavourably with \$ 35.3 million granted to Formosa and \$ 6.2 million sanctioned for Indo-China.

Q: But do not we recognise France's suzerainty over Indo-China for diplomatic purposes?

JN: Yes. The question arises only where Indian interests are involved. If Indian interests are involved there, we refer to the French Government—at least thus far we have referred to the French Government for those areas where the French Government hold sway. For the other areas it is no good referring to them, because they do not hold any authority there.

Q: May I ask a question about this Kashmir dispute which is now before the Security Council.³⁰ The earlier statements created an impression as if General McNaughton's³¹ proposals³² were put up after they had been given consideration by both Indian and Pakistan representatives and that India, having once said that they were acceptable, later backed out. Not that that is so, but one does gather that impression from the type of despatches that come from there. I am wondering whether you can throw any light on the negotiations behind the scenes, whether there was any commitment of any kind by India and what exactly is the position now.

JN: To begin with, General McNaughton met our representatives on two or three occasions and had long talks with them. Then, at about the same time he met representatives of the Pakistan Government and had separate talks with them. Then, he produced his proposals which he sent to both Governments as his final conclusion as a result of those talks. We informed him about our reactions to those proposals—and some time later Pakistan informed him of their reactions. After that we were asked if we wanted any amendments to the proposals. Thereupon certain amendments to his proposals were sent by us and I understand Pakistan also sent amendments later.³³ So, McNaughton is in possession of amendments from both

30. On 17 December, the Kashmir Commission's report came up for discussion before the Security Council.
31. General Andrew G.L. McNaughton (1887-1966); Chief of the Canadian General Staff, 1929-35; G.O.C.-in-C, First Canadian Army, 1942-43; Minister of National Defence, Canada, 1944-45; Canada's representative on the Security Council, 1948-49.
32. On 22 December, McNaughton proposed a plan for the progressive demilitarization of Kashmir which was unacceptable to India as it accorded the same status to India and Pakistan on the one hand and to Jammu and Kashmir state and 'Azad Kashmir' area on the other.
33. India had proposed major amendments providing for the disbanding and disarming of the 'Azad' forces, and for the return of the Northern Areas to India for defence and to Jammu and Kashmir Government for administration. Pakistan interpreted these amendments as "a clear rejection" of the proposals and refused to agree on that basis. Pakistan had accepted the proposals, suggesting minor amendments. India had objections to Pakistan's amendments, primarily to that of limiting the scope of the U.N. representatives' work to the resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949.

India and Pakistan and presumably, if no common way out is found, the matter will go back to the Security Council. I think it will be completely incorrect to assume that any basic proposals of General McNaughton had been agreed to previously; of course, something had been agreed to by India. We wanted a settlement; we accepted a plebiscite but the new things that he proposed have certainly not been agreed to.

Q: The amendments that have been suggested by India and Pakistan have not been released to the press as yet.

JN: No.

Q: Is General McNaughton still seized of the question or is he going out of the picture as he has ceased to be the Chairman?

JN: That too is not clear, but I suppose he is still seized of the question till the Security Council meets and makes other arrangements.

Q: Could we say that the amendments from both sides amount to some sort of a vague rejection of the proposals?

JN: One could say that the amendments from each side go in contrary directions.

7. To Ghulam Mohammed¹

New Delhi

January 18, 1950

My dear Ghulam Mohammed,

During our brief talks in Colombo you expressed your eagerness to help in every way in resolving the disputes between Pakistan and India. You invited me to go to Karachi and also offered to come to Delhi at short notice if this was necessary. Referring to the proposed joint declaration to be made by the Governments of India and Pakistan, you said that this could go through if some slight mention was made about the method of settlement. Regarding Kashmir, you appreciated that the matter was with the United Nations. The two major questions that remained were: canal waters and evacuee property. We have made it repeatedly clear that we are prepared for a peaceful settlement of these through arbitration or some tribunal, and it would be easy to say so in the event of our technical commissions and negotiations failing to arrive at an agreement.

1. J.N. Collection.

I have now seen a report of what you said at a press conference in Colombo on January 16th.² I must say that this does not support the attitude that you took up with me. I have also seen your Prime Minister's statement in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly.³ This again is not very helpful.

I must confess to having a feeling that what you said personally to me does not fit in with your public statements which are in an entirely different key.

Regarding the proposed joint declaration, I do not understand how we can tie up that declaration with any specific issue. Of course, we can deal with the specific issue separately in a separate statement or in exchange of correspondence. So far as the two main issues are concerned, that is canal waters and evacuee property, I see no difficulty whatever in our finding a method of solution agreeable to both Governments, should negotiations fail. But it is obvious that even a reference to arbitration or a tribunal can only be made when the facts are precisely known and the extent of difference. One cannot specify a tribunal before knowing what is going to be referred. It seems to me quite enough to say that in the event of lack of agreement the matter should be decided by arbitration or reference to a tribunal chosen by the parties concerned. This largely meets your viewpoint and would be in keeping with our declaration.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Ghulam Mohammed had said that India was delaying a settlement on Kashmir. When Attlee and Truman suggested arbitration, India had rejected that proposal. When asked about Indian proposal for a no-war pact Ghulam Mohammed said that what was needed was not statements and speeches but machinery to settle disputes through mediation or arbitration.
3. Liaquat Ali Khan stated that "the only way to promote peace is to resolve major disputes. A joint declaration will carry conviction to no one unless it is supported by evidence of some concrete action.... At least the procedure for settling them can be laid down."

8. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi
January 18, 1950

My dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to you about the proposed joint declaration by the Governments of India and Pakistan for the avoidance of war.

On the 16th January we received a copy of a statement which you were to make in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly in reply to a question regarding this

1. J.N. Collection.

proposed joint declaration by the Governments of India and Pakistan for the avoidance of war in the settlement of disputes. In this statement it is said that, in the view of the Government of Pakistan, the only way to promote peace is to resolve major disputes. Even if these disputes cannot themselves be settled before the declaration is made, at least the procedure for settling them can be laid down by agreement in precise terms in the declaration. Further that your Government urge the Government of India to agree to the concrete and precise suggestions of the Government of Pakistan already made regarding the procedure to be followed in the settlement of disputes.

I was not aware of any concrete and precise suggestions of the Government of Pakistan or its High Commissioner in Delhi in this respect. All that had happened previously was that your High Commissioner had mentioned various matters in dispute and referred to possible methods of settling them. No concrete or precise procedure had been suggested. We had dealt with the points raised by your High Commissioner, whereupon it was agreed that a tentative draft of a declaration might be prepared. This draft was handed to your High Commissioner on the 22nd December 1949. The first reply to it that we received is the copy of your statement, which reached us on the 16th January. We were surprised to find in this a reference to certain concrete and precise suggestions, which we had not thus far received.

I have now seen newspaper reports of the full statement made by you before the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on January 17th.² You refer in this to the various matters which are, according to you, in dispute. As you know, the Kashmir issue is before the United Nations and has therefore to be considered separately. As regards Junagadh, I am surprised at your reference to it, as this is not a live issue.

The canal waters issue has been the subject of correspondence between the two Governments and both are practically agreed that a joint technical commission should be set up for making a factual investigation. On the basis of the report of the commission, the two Governments will confer with a view to arriving at a settlement. If it is not found possible to reach a settlement, we are quite prepared to refer the matter to arbitration or some tribunal approved of by both Governments. You will appreciate that the manner of subsequent procedure as well as the forum can hardly be decided satisfactorily before we know what the results of the technical commission are and what the remaining points for decision are.

We are prepared that the evacuee property dispute should be settled by arbitration, if negotiations and mediation fail.

2. Liaquat Ali referred to the 'No-War' proposal from India and said that on 3 December the Pakistan High Commissioner had told the Secretary General, Ministry of External Affairs of India that Pakistan welcomed the proposals and all outstanding disputes should be settled by peaceful means.

So far as the division of the Reserve Bank's assets is concerned,³ the major portion of the assets claimed by Pakistan has already been transferred to the State Bank, and in regard to the remaining claims, disagreement has arisen on the question of the mode of payment. The question thus is one of the manner in which the claims have to be settled. This matter has already been discussed informally between the two Governments, and Pakistan themselves have suggested a conference to discuss it further. There are a number of other issues connected with this matter, all of which would have to be considered in arriving at a settlement.

The question of payment of sterling depends upon the amount that is due and of which type it is, whether current or blocked. Both these matters are eminently fit for settlement by negotiation and indeed, as I have mentioned above, a conference is envisaged.

As you know, the Government of India have large claims of a financial nature on the Pakistan Government. These have been pending for a long time without any satisfactory settlement. This again should be dealt with by negotiation and, in the absence of any settlement, by other peaceful methods.

The whole object of the proposed joint declaration was to remove or lessen the unfortunate tension that exists between our two Governments and to produce an atmosphere which is more favourable to the consideration and settlement of particular disputes. If these disputes are satisfactorily settled separately, we would welcome it. But obviously there has been difficulty and delay in doing this. A joint declaration would, no doubt, be helpful in bringing us nearer to a settlement of all outstanding disputes between the two Governments, which the Government of India earnestly desire.

The procedure for settling disputes cannot be uniform in all cases. It is possible that one method may be appropriate for one dispute and another method for another dispute. Apart from negotiation and mediation, the only remaining peaceful methods are arbitration and reference to some international authority or tribunal. That is precise enough.

The proposal to make a joint declaration was made by the Government of India in all earnestness, so that we might take one effective step forward towards the resolution of existing disputes between the two Governments. Not to take this first step, because the other steps are not simultaneously taken, is to avoid taking any steps at all for the present at least. That is not a very helpful way of proceeding in this matter. For us to say that in no event are we going to war for a settlement

3. On 27 November 1947, the Governments of India and Pakistan had agreed to sign an accord on the sharing of cash balances and uncovered debts. India linked this agreement with the Kashmir question. On 17 January 1948, Pakistan's share of cash balances was paid, keeping Rs. 50 million "as an advance adjustment of certain claims against India." In the same month Pakistan raised objections on the basis of an agreement signed before the partition. Pakistan alleged in the Security Council that India was bent upon destroying "the monetary and currency balance of Pakistan."

of disputes is an important and significant contribution to peace between the two countries. The Government of India are prepared to say that, if the Government of Pakistan is also agreeable. Owing to geography and for many other reasons, it is inevitable that many issues arise between the two countries which require settlement. A firm declaration that we will in any event settle them by peaceful methods will itself be a great service to our two countries and the world, because it will remove fear of war from the minds of our peoples.

Any joint declaration that we might make must necessarily be in general terms to cover all cases that may arise now or hereafter. Apart from this joint declaration, and in pursuance of it, we can at once begin to consider specific matters separately.

I shall be glad to have an early reply from you.⁴

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. On 14 February 1950, Liaquat Ali Khan replied that in all cases listed in Nehru's letter, both India and Pakistan should agree to arbitration. It should also be agreed that all points of difference including those relating to procedure should, if necessary, be referred to arbitration so that neither party could hold up or obstruct a settlement.

9. To Ghulam Mohammed¹

New Delhi
February 1, 1950

My dear Ghulam Mohammed,

You will remember telling me that Ambegaonkar² had said in Colombo that the Government of India might not accept the decision of the International Monetary Fund if this decision maintained the Pakistan value of the rupee at the present level. I have enquired from him as to what happened on that occasion. He tells me that the proposal made at Colombo by Sir Henry Wilson Smith³ was that India should provisionally accept the rate declared by Pakistan, and Pakistan, on their side, should get a decision on the par value from the International Monetary Fund. To this, Ambegaonkar replied that this proposal would not be acceptable to India for various reasons which he indicated.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Krishnanath Ganesh Ambegaonkar (b. 1902); joined I.C.S. in 1926; served in Central Provinces in various capacities; Joint Controller of Imports, 1943-1944; Joint Secretary, Finance Department, 1944-1947; Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance, 1948-1949; Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, 1950-54.
3. (1904-1978); Additional Second Treasury Secretary, 1948-51; Director, Guest Keen and Nettlefolds Ltd., 1951-72; Director, Bank of England, 1964-70.

You further told me that Pakistan's ban on cloth was really due to the fact that the Government of India refused to permit Pakistan from buying cloth in India with the money they had in India. I am informed that there is no kind of restriction on the withdrawal of the rupee balance held by Pakistan. In fact, out of these balances held by Pakistan at the time of devaluation, they have already withdrawn about four crores for various expenses.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10. Refugees from East Bengal¹

...This matter² has caused the Government great concern and they have taken all such measures that they could in regard to it in consultation with the West Bengal Government. They have approached the Pakistan Government and the Government of eastern Pakistan too and they have suggested meetings of principal officials to investigate and find out what the position is, and they are taking such steps in West Bengal with regard to these refugees³ as are possible for them; so that I can assure the House that Government takes a very serious view of the situation. In fact, some trouble has arisen in Murshidabad on our own side of the border, and unless all these are checked completely, they are likely to have far-reaching consequences. It cannot help very much, apart from the relevancy of the motion, to have any such discussion at this stage, involving all manner of factors including our relations with Pakistan, what is happening inside Pakistan about which we cannot immediately say in detail what it is, relations between the provincial governments and the Centre, etc., so that I would submit that it is not a fit subject for a motion for adjournment, but I do assure the House that Government are fully seized of it and intend to do everything to meet the situation.

1. Proceedings of Provisional Parliament, 1 February 1950. Reply to a notice of an adjournment motion on influx of refugees from East Bengal. After Nehru had spoken, the adjournment motion was withdrawn. *Parliamentary Debates (Official Report)*, Vol. I, Part II, 28th January-23 February 1950, p. 28. Extracts.
2. Following attacks on the minority community in many villages of Khulna district of East Bengal large scale rioting broke out in Howrah and Calcutta. This in its turn led to widespread violence and massacre of the minority community in parts of East Bengal and an unprecedented influx of refugees into India.
3. Till 14 February, 24,239 people had come to West Bengal.

11. To K.C. Neogy¹

New Delhi
February 4, 1950

My dear Neogy,²

Reference was made yesterday at the Cabinet meeting to the foodstuffs belonging to Pakistan which are held up by us in Calcutta. I think that we should begin releasing this as soon as possible. You gave some adequate reasons for this yesterday. An even more important reason is that by releasing these foodstuffs we strengthen our position in regard to the other matters, such as coal, etc. Otherwise, we would give occasion for sharp criticism and propaganda against us. A thing like food should not be held up except under the gravest provocation. The release of the foodstuffs need not be total and sudden, but gradual and progressive.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 26(30)/48-PMS.
2. Union Minister for Commerce.

12. To K.C. Neogy¹

New Delhi
February 6, 1950

My dear Neogy,

Your letter of the 6th February about the release of Pakistan foodstuffs detained in transit in Calcutta.

You are the best judge of this and should act as you think fit. My feeling is that the release of some of the Pakistan foodstuffs detained by us would be good. More need not be released till some more of the jute comes. This will indicate that we are perfectly willing to reciprocate. If on the other hand the other party stops, then we stop too. In such matters there is always a slight risk of neither party getting a move on, because the other appears not to be playing up. But as I have said, you are the best person to judge....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 26 (30)/48-PMS. Extracts.

13. No Retaliation on any Account¹

For sometime past I have been greatly concerned with developments in East Bengal and their repercussions in West Bengal. I have followed these events with anxiety, in which all my colleagues in Government have fully shared. These developments in East Bengal have brought unhappiness and misery to large numbers of people, many of whom have been forced by circumstances to migrate towards West Bengal. Apart from this human misery involved, the situation is full of danger. The Government of West Bengal and the Government of India, fully conscious of this danger, have given earnest thought to this question and taken action to meet the situation. Inevitably we cannot control happenings in East Bengal, except by consultation with the Pakistan Central Government and the Government of East Bengal. On our side of the border we are of course fully responsible. We have taken steps therefore on our side and we have been in constant and urgent consultation with the Pakistan Government on these issues.

Certain repercussions that took place in Murshidabad district were speedily and effectively handled by the West Bengal Government. Meanwhile, other developments have taken place in certain parts of Calcutta,² which have added to the gravity of the situation. I would like to make an earnest appeal to the people of Calcutta to help in every way in controlling this situation and bringing it back to normal. Whatever action we take now or later, cannot possibly be helped by disturbances in Calcutta or elsewhere. Above all, attempts at retaliation are not only essentially bad from every point of view but also are harmful and weaken the action we might take. I can well understand the strong feelings that have been aroused by accounts brought by refugees and others, from East Bengal. We share those feelings. But action should not flow from feeling and emotion alone. In order to be effective and firm, it has to be calm and well thought out and must be based on right principles. Otherwise that action is not only ineffective but is injurious to the very cause for which we stand. In trying to solve one problem, we should not give rise to other and more difficult problems. On no account must we fall a prey to communal passion and retaliation. The problem of Calcutta in West Bengal is not a provincial problem only but an all-India one, and the burden of solving it must rest with the whole of India. In this matter differences in political approach

1. Statement to the press, New Delhi, 10 February 1950. Published on 11 February 1950. Extracts.
2. Calcutta was rocked by a violent agitation protesting against police firing on refugees in Sealdah on 18 January 1950. Several thousand students of Calcutta University went on a protest march to the Secretariat the next day. The police fired on them, causing four deaths and injuries to 15 persons. This touched off violence on the streets causing much destruction especially to tram cars and state buses. It took Calcutta twelve days to return to normal.

do not or should not count, for all political progress depends upon certain basic fundamentals of having an ordered society and tolerance for each other. An ordered society faces those who seek to injure it with firmness and effectiveness. If that basis goes, then anti-social elements have free play.

I would therefore appeal to the citizens of Calcutta and the people of West Bengal, including the refugees who have come over from East Bengal, to put an end speedily to the manifestations of disorder and to help in bringing normality to the life of that great city....

14. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Having seen your statement published in *Dawn* of February fourteenth² on the recent happenings in the two Bengals, I am surprised that the happenings in East Bengal should have been minimised and the happenings in West Bengal should have been exaggerated out of all proportion. The picture conveyed by this statement is a distorted one. According to reports received by us, the incidents in Khulna³ sometime ago, and in Dacca,⁴ Barisal and other places more recently have been

1. New Delhi, 17 February 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali issued a statement on 13 February that communal riots in Calcutta and other parts of West Bengal had led to exodus to East Bengal. These outbreaks had repercussions in Dhaka. The Khulna incident was said to be non-communal in character and an attempt by the communists to create trouble, but it was given wide publicity and a communal colour by the Calcutta press.
3. When police went on 20 December 1949 to arrest a communist in Kalshira village in Bagerhat sub-division of Khulna district in East Bengal, one policeman was killed by the people. Later the police and the Ansars (Muslim volunteers) beat up the villagers and looted this and the neighbouring villages. The people from that village ran away, taking in their wake all the other villagers on their way to India. Within one month, 30,000 Hindus had run from Khulna into India. The refugees came to India with horror stories.
4. On 9 February 1950, in the East Bengal Assembly, the leader of the Hindu members asked the Chief Minister to investigate the reason for the sudden exodus from Khulna district. The Chief Minister retorted by calling him a traitor and this was reported by the Dhaka radio. The broadcast was hardly over when the clerks of the Dhaka secretariat took out a procession shouting slogans which incited the population to attack and loot Hindu shops. The police, who had heard the broadcast and recognised officials among the processionists, thought that the riot was organised by the Government and rushed to share the loot. Many shops were looted or burnt and between four and five hundred people were killed in the first few hours. The riots went on for several days, in spite of imposition of a curfew from 10 to 20 February.

of a very serious character. We have received most harrowing accounts of suffering undergone by non-Muslims in different parts of East Bengal. We greatly deplore the recent incidents in Calcutta. These were due to the working up of communal feelings, but they cannot be compared in gravity and extent with the happenings in East Bengal. We believe that they were the repercussions of the large scale suppression and humiliations to which the minority community have been subjected during the last three months over large areas in East Bengal. The situation in Calcutta has been quiet for the last three days and I have every reason to believe that it is under complete control now. For months preceding the incidents in Khulna district, the communal situation in East and West Bengal was normal. In our view the incidents in Calcutta were precipitated by the cruel treatment of large numbers of non-Muslims in Bagerhat sub-division of Khulna district resulting in large scale migration to West Bengal and the failure of the East Bengal Government to deal with the situation quickly and effectively. Even now reports are reaching us of alleged attacks on minorities in various parts of East Bengal and also of the serious condition of a large number of refugees who are now in camps.

There are no means of our ascertaining the magnitude of the happenings in East Bengal today. In the absence of such information the issue of non-committal official statements serves no useful purpose. Perhaps, on your side also unauthorised and exaggerated reports may be creating difficulties. There can be no doubt that communal passions have been roused and, I hope, you will agree that immediate steps should be taken to restore confidence in the minds of the minorities in both Bengals. It seems to me that the immediate thing to do would be for each Government to give facilities to the Deputy High Commissioner of the other Government for freely visiting areas alleged to be affected and ascertaining the facts. In addition, with a view to inspire confidence in the public mind, I suggest that joint commissions be appointed for touring round the affected areas and collecting reliable information on the basis of which the two Governments might evolve a plan for the restoration and maintenance of communal peace. I would earnestly ask you to agree to these suggestions. Two fact-finding commissions may be appointed, one for East Bengal and the other for West Bengal. Each commission may consist of two representatives each, nominated by East and West Bengal Governments, of whom one should be a minister. Each commission should ascertain facts about the happenings that have taken place since the 1st December 1949 as well as assess the existing situation and prospects of its improving. The particular incidents which should form the subjects of fact-finding in either province should be left to be indicated by the Government of the other province. I attach, however, the greatest importance to getting the commissions appointed at once and to their starting work without loss of time if possible, within a week at the latest. They should be instructed to complete their work and submit their reports at the earliest possible date.

I feel most strongly that you and I must jointly guide the handling of the situation and that unless the Governments of the two countries take immediate action on the lines suggested, we shall be failing in the duty that we owe to the minorities in our respective countries, the restoration of confidence amongst whom is vital to the maintenance of friendly relations between us. Request immediate reply.

I am sending a copy of this telegram direct to the Premier, East Bengal Government and another copy to the Chief Minister, West Bengal.

15. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi

February 17, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

I have sent you a telegram this evening suggesting that two joint commissions should be appointed to visit East and West Bengal to ascertain the facts. My proposal does not mean that we should have elaborate enquiries, but rather that a fairly quick overall survey might be made by representatives of East and West Bengal. The advantage of this is obvious. Both our Governments as well as both the Provincial Governments will be in possession of a more or less reliable report of recent events and the existing situation. In addition to this, the mere visit of such a joint commission would help in lessening the apprehension of many people and thus lessen the abnormalities of the present situation.

I have made this proposal with a feeling of great urgency and I earnestly trust that you will agree to it, so that we may take the steps proposed immediately. This is of course an essential preliminary step. It does not take us far. I am greatly exercised in mind over recent developments. It is not my desire to enter into an argument with you about what has happened. But I want to tell you quite frankly that the accounts and the stories that have reached us about recent happenings in East Bengal have shocked me greatly. I am terribly sorry for what took place in Calcutta. But all the information at my disposal indicates that there is no comparison between Calcutta happenings and East Bengal happenings. It is little comfort, however, for either of us to measure and balance evil. Something has happened,

1. J.N. Collection.



ASSAM, WEST BENGAL AND EAST BENGAL, 1950



WITH GIRL GUIDES AT NILOKHERI, 22 FEBRUARY 1950

which was not merely intensely evil in itself but it might be a portent of much greater evil.

It is patent that we cannot wait and watch supinely for tragedy to descend upon us, without making every effort to avert it. Both of us, in our respective spheres of activity, have to bear a terrible responsibility. The weight of this oppresses me and I have to question myself repeatedly as to whether I am discharging it adequately or not. We have tried repeatedly to meet in inter-Dominion conferences and sometimes it has appeared that things are on the mend. We thought that the situation as between East and West Bengal had stabilised itself and improved. Recent events have shown that we were mistaken and were deluding ourselves. For the moment it is immaterial as to where the fault lay, though I have my own clear views on this subject. The fact is, as I see it, that conditions have arisen in East Bengal which make it exceedingly difficult for non-Muslims to live there with security. There will be an inevitable tendency on their part to migrate beyond the borders of Pakistan. It may be that there are a number of Muslims in West Bengal, who also desire to migrate. My own impression is that the latter number will be far smaller than the former.

The populations involved are enormous. It seems to me fantastic and totally impracticable to think in terms of these large migrations. It is equally impossible for us to look on, when millions of people live in a state of fear and apprehension and lack security, and there is constant danger of an eruption such as we have seen. Life is not worth living under these conditions and there cannot be any stability or normality.

That is the problem and I wish to place it before you frankly, because we seem to have explored many avenues of settling it without success. We have to face that problem in all its grim reality. That problem, in its wider aspects, takes many shapes. But for the moment I am confining it to East and West Bengal. We may carry on an argument in the press or platform, but that will not solve the problem. It will only make it worse. It has thus become absolutely imperative for us to come to clear conclusions as to how we can give complete security of person and property and mind and work to people who live either in East or West Bengal. If we cannot give that security, then critical conditions continue demanding other action.

I am writing this personal letter to you, because my mind is greatly troubled and is trying to seek some remedy for this evil that has descended upon us. The lives of millions of people are involved in it. It is no small matter and it will be a shame and tragedy of the worst kind, if we prove incapable of dealing with this situation.

Whatever else we may have to do, it seems to me incumbent that immediate steps should be taken to find out the facts. Any decision that we may have to take

will have to be based on reality and not on surmise. Therefore, I earnestly trust that you will agree to the proposal to have joint commissions.²

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Liaquat Ali, in his reply of 18 February turned down the proposal of two joint fact-finding commissions and suggested that a declaration of both Governments that they discouraged migrations from one part of Bengal to another be issued at once. The declaration should also assure that the two Governments would rehabilitate the minorities in their homes and protect their life and property.

16. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
17 February, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Thank you for your letter of the 15th February.² We are giving the most earnest consideration to this problem of Hindus in East Bengal. I agree with you that we can no longer drift and we must come to clear decisions as to the policy to be adopted. Personally I think that this business of shifting millions of people is entirely beyond our capacity. The mere attempt will create enormous difficulty and conflict. It is quite certain that not an inch of territory is going to be given to us by Pakistan, except possibly by war. We really thus are face to face with ultimate alternatives.

I think we should consider this matter after a short interval, not very long. After another two or three weeks the situation will be somewhat clearer.

I might give you my own appraisal of the general situation. I think that the months before the monsoon are rather critical. If we pass that period, the tension and the possibility of a major conflict will gradually get less. If we pass the next seven or eight months, that possibility will be even less. We have to view the situation therefore in this short range aspect.

I suggest that you might come over here after about three weeks or so, for us to discuss with you all these matters fully. Meanwhile, as you know, we have suggested joint commissions to enquire into the events in East and West Bengal. If these commissions come off, it would be a good thing to wait for their report before we meet.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. *With Dr. B.C. Roy and Other Chief Ministers* by Saroj Chakrabarty, Calcutta, 1974, pp. 157-158.
2. In his letter of 15 February Roy had brought to Nehru's notice the problems created by the sudden exodus of refugees and the perilous condition of the Hindus in some districts of East Bengal. Roy also mentioned the possibility of exchange of populations.

17. To Jogesh Chandra Paul¹

New Delhi
February 17, 1950

Dear Shri Jogesh Chandra,

I have your letter of the 15th February. You have every right to be frank or impertinent, if you like. If you are frank and write what you feel, I cannot take exception to your language. I can understand your feeling and I can assure you that I share that feeling. I cannot answer your questions immediately, but I agree that some answer has to be found both for you and for millions of others. You suggest that we should liberate the Hindus of Pakistan by military measures. I would not hesitate to do so, if that solved the problem. But whatever result that might bring ultimately it would lead to the sacrifice of a large number of those very people, whom we might seek to liberate.

I can assure you that we are giving the most earnest and urgent consideration to this matter. You need not come to Delhi at least for the present. If you have any special facts in your possession, you can send them to me by post or you can communicate them to Dr B.C. Roy, Chief Minister of Bengal.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

18. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Details received about incident at Kurmitola Aerodrome in Dacca the other day gruesome. Telegram has been received here today by a Member of Parliament from a person who escaped from East Bengal, walked on foot from Belonia to Agartala from where he despatched telegram. Telegram begins:

Arson looting killing started Feni at 3 P.M. of thirteenth and continued whole night. Prominent Hindu leaders done to death. Some burnt alive. Surviving

1. 18 February 1950. J.N. Collection.

Hindus numbering twenty thousand took shelter in college, school buildings grounds under open sky. Miseries know no bounds. No Hindu allowed to leave Pakistan. On twelfth thirteenth about two thousand Hindus including infants, ladies done to death on the Bhairab bridge on Meghna river in Tipperah district. Stabbing cases limitless. Hindus of Feni Noakhali kept cordoned on border and prevented entering India. Chittagong reports extremely precarious.

This is a telegram from a private person. I can therefore not vouch for the accuracy of its contents.² It is possible there is some exaggeration but there is enough in the telegram which indicates the gravity of what is happening in East Pakistan. The West Bengal Chief Minister has been in telephonic touch with the East Bengal Premier and has been apprising him of news of this kind from private sources which have reached him. But so far the East Bengal Government have shown a deplorable indifference and they appear to be incapable of bringing under control this widespread defiance of elementary law and order, including murder, arson and loot.

The quiet in Calcutta and West Bengal continues to be maintained and we are doing our best to prevent communal passions being roused again in our limits. If news of this kind spreads in India a situation of most serious proportions will develop. I would earnestly ask you to intervene immediately and act strongly and effectively to bring East Bengal situation under control. I have thought it necessary to apprise you of the kind of reports we get. The telegram I have extracted above is only one of many such.

May I ask you for immediate reply regarding action suggested in my telegram of yesterday?³

2. Liaquat Ali replied on 20 February 1950 that trouble broke out in Feni on 13 February resulting in seven deaths and ten wounded. "The version of telegram quoted by you is of course grossly exaggerated and shows unbalanced mind of an agitated person. I am also receiving many such telegrams from Muslims who have escaped into Pakistan."
3. Liaquat Ali replied that the East Bengal Government was dealing with the situation most energetically. He was in constant touch with the developments in East Bengal and repudiated Nehru's remarks about their indifference. The influx of Muslim refugees into East Bengal from Karimgunj, Assam and Tripura was creating grave complications and keeping the situation tense. He requested Nehru to prevent the Muslim exodus from adjoining areas. Three Pakistani Central ministers—Khwaja Shahabuddin, A.M. Malik and J.N. Mandal—present in East Bengal were of the opinion that normal conditions would be restored throughout the province within the next few days provided nothing untoward happened in Calcutta and elsewhere.

19. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Thank you for your telegram No. 868 of February 18. I am happy to note that you have instructed the East Bengal Government to give every facility to our Deputy High Commissioner at Dacca to visit freely areas alleged to be affected and to ascertain facts for himself. We have issued similar instructions to the West Bengal Government in respect of your Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta. In fact, as you are aware, your High Commissioner has been in Calcutta for some days seeing things for himself.

I entirely agree that you and I must jointly find a practical and lasting solution of the minority problem in our respective countries.² I have carefully considered your suggestion that our two Governments should issue a declaration to the effect that they do not favour and will do everything possible to discourage movement of refugees from one country to the other.³ It is true that refugees bring tales of woe, sometimes greatly exaggerated, which tend to inflame communal passions. At the same time, after what is alleged to have happened in large areas in East Bengal,⁴ we could hardly refuse to accept persons fleeing from terror. The first step in my view would be to have a dependable appreciation of the situation prevailing in the two Bengals by persons whose statements will carry conviction.

I do not contemplate that there should be any detailed enquiry into the alleged happenings. What is required is a rapid survey of the situation after visits paid to as many affected areas as possible. This should not take more than about ten days. If the results of the survey show that the situation has returned to normal and that everything possible is being done by the Governments concerned to protect and restore confidence among the minorities then only can we take a strong stand and advise the minorities to stay where they are. In that event we may also consider taking steps to prevent movement of refugees. I therefore repeat my suggestion for fact-finding joint commissions and trust that you will find yourself in a position

1. New Delhi, 20 February 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had written on 18 February that "we must concentrate above all on immediate steps to restore confidence in minority communities on either side."
3. Liaquat Ali had written that the declaration should also contain an assurance from the two Governments that all possible steps would be taken to rehabilitate the minorities in their homes and to see that they were given full protection of life and property.
4. On 20 January 1950, the Calcutta press published accounts of police atrocities on the Hindus of Khulna in East Bengal. As the story of the incidents travelled with the evacuees, it grew in proportion. On 18 January, communal disturbances broke out at Dhaka. On 13 February many lives were lost in riots at Feni in Noakhali district and in Barisal in East Bengal. From 16 to 20 February, trouble spread in the rural areas of East Bengal. When news of these riotings filtered back into West Bengal, communal violence marked by mob action and individual reprisals broke out in Calcutta.

to accept it. I am strongly of the opinion that immediate prevention of the movement of refugees at this stage will create still more panic and will not at all achieve the object you have in mind.⁵ I agree however that every attempt should be made to rehabilitate in their homes those who have taken shelter in camps. In fact this is already being done in West Bengal.

5. Liaquat Ali had written that the population of Calcutta contained a large element of people who had come from all districts of East and West Bengal and if they went back to their homes it was certain that mischief would spread all over a very wide area. He hoped that Nehru would impress upon the West Bengal Government the need for keeping this in mind while checking an exodus from Calcutta. He added that thousands of refugees were still pouring into Dhaka.

20. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have sent you a separate telegram in answer to your telegram 868 of February 18th. I feel strongly that the joint commissions visiting certain areas in West and East Bengal will produce a calming and soothing effect on both sides and will largely put an end to exaggerated reports which excite people. We continue to receive reports about conditions in East Bengal which are most disturbing. I earnestly hope you will agree to proposal for joint commissions and that we shall give effect to them as speedily as possible.²

As you know I have been greatly exercised about recent events and feel we must do our utmost to meet this terrible challenge to the peoples of both India and Pakistan. I have come to the conclusion that in addition to and apart from the visit of the joint commissions, you and I should visit together affected areas on either side.³ Such a visit will produce a marked psychological effect in both countries and would infuse greater confidence in minds of terror-stricken people;

1. New Delhi, 20 February 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali Khan did not accept the proposals for joint commissions or for joint visits by the two Prime Ministers. He suggested instead: 1. all found guilty of criminal offences should be punished; 2. all who had suffered in disturbances should be helped; 3. every effort to recover and restore abducted women should be made; 4. intensive search should be made for looted property; 5. persons and newspapers responsible for mischievous rumours and propaganda should be rigorously dealt with; 6. each Government would appoint a committee to enquire into the disturbances and recommend the steps to prevent recrudescence of trouble.
3. Liaquat Ali replied, "You would remember that you and I had toured East and West Punjab personally and would no doubt agree how futile our trip proved to be. I do not therefore think anything is likely to be achieved by a joint tour proposed by you."

and will lay a sure foundation for the two Governments arriving at agreed and effective solutions for trouble which confronts us and which so frequently brings tragedy in its train. I trust you will agree. We might pay this joint visit early in March.

21. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
20 February, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

For some days past I have not had occasion to talk to you at any length, though we have met in the Working Committee and elsewhere. My mind has been greatly troubled and has been exploring various avenues of thought and action. This no doubt is a culmination of many happenings. But the immediate cause for this agitation of mind has been two-fold. One is the events in East and West Bengal, and the attitude of our party on various occasions and more especially in the debates on the Assam Bill² and the Evacuee Property Bill.³ In the course of these debates, things were said by members of our party, which hurt me as well as some of our colleagues, namely, Gopalaswami and Neogy. They wrote to me about it and I think I passed on their letters to you. Those incidents by themselves may not have been very important, and yet they were significant of a trend which I consider very harmful. They were also significant of what I might call a basic difference in approach to various problems between the party and me. I think part of our troubles is certainly due to this difference in approach. Hence the party is dissatisfied often enough with what we do. At the same time it does not seek the natural way out of this impasse. It votes with us *en bloc* and at the same time criticises us bitterly. Criticism need not matter much. But some of the speeches delivered not only injure Government's prestige but create a bad effect on the public. I am reliably informed that some of the speeches on the Evacuee Property Bill have had a bad effect not only in Delhi but outside also. Indeed I had a message from Kashmir that people

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 1-6. Extracts.

2. A serious situation had arisen from the immigration of a very large number of East Bengal residents into Assam in the previous months. The influx between 50,000 to 100,000 people largely for economic reasons was also creating problems of law and order. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, on 21 December, sponsored a bill called Immigrants Expulsion from Assam Act, 1950, seeking to provide for the expulsion from Assam of such persons whose presence was deemed "detrimental to the interests of India." On 7 January 1950, the Government of India promulgated an ordinance to this effect.

3. This prohibited transfer of ownership of some urban immovable evacuee property.

were disturbed there by these speeches. They have added to the communal tension and made it worse...

To go back to what I began with. The problem of East and West Bengal troubles my mind greatly and I have been thinking frequently as to how we can help. We have to be clear in our minds and action before another disaster descends upon us. Because of this, I telegraphed to Liaquat Ali Khan suggesting that he and I should go to East and West Bengal. I have had no answer yet. But the more I think of it, the more I feel that some striking step should be taken in this matter.

So far as the party is concerned, it is not only getting out of touch with Government's policies and activities, but is also drifting away further and further from my own approach to these problems. I think the biggest issue in India is the Indo-Pakistan issue. This stretches from Kashmir to East Bengal, although the problems are different. I think that war between India and Pakistan will have dangerous consequences and should be avoided, unless it is forced upon us. At the same time circumstances demand that our policy towards Pakistan should be clear and firm. The party has repeatedly made it clear by its speeches that it disapproves of much that we have done in regard to Pakistan. Now this is a very vital matter and I entirely disagree with many of the criticisms made by the party. The difference is basic. If that is so, then it is improper for me to continue guiding some policy which does not meet with the approval of members of the party. On the other hand, I could not possibly act against my own convictions on vital issues. The result is I am all the time getting into petty conflict either with the party or sometimes even with certain activities of the Rehabilitation Ministry. The whole trend of the Rehabilitation Ministry is, I think, completely wrong.

This is a negative approach to the problem. The positive approach is a strong and earnest desire on my part to spend some time in the Bengals. This is apart from that joint tour with Liaquat Ali Khan that I suggested. I think I could make a difference there and it is of the highest importance that we should not allow ourselves to be submerged by the Bengal problem. Hence I have come to the conclusion that I should get out of office and concentrate on one or two matters in which I think I can be helpful. The principal matters would be the Bengal problem and Kashmir. I cannot do this as Prime Minister, more especially because the views of the party are not in line with my own. There is a constant cry for retaliation and of vicarious punishment of the Muslims of India, because the Pakistanis punish Hindus. That argument does not appeal to me in the slightest. I am sure that this policy of retaliation and vicarious punishment will ruin India as well as Pakistan. We have set going a chain of action and reaction and unless one breaks out of that chain, we can never overcome these troubles.

I try to give you some reasons for my thinking. But in reality my thought at present is powerfully guided by a strong urge in me to act, as I have indicated. I have considered all the arguments for and against and I realised that whatever I might do would bring a certain amount of confusion. In the balance, however,

I am quite convinced that I would serve the cause of our country much better today in a private capacity than in the public office that I hold. If I can be of any real use in the Bengals at present, then that would be a great service indeed. I want to try that. I also want to put an end to this constant bickering in the party and our rubbing each other in the wrong way from time to time. Even from other points of view about the future what I suggest has great value.

I have written to you frankly as to how I feel and I wish to repeat that, constituted as I am, I find it more and more difficult not to take some such action as I have indicated above.²

I am sending a copy of this letter to Rajendra Babu.

Yours
Jawaharlal

2. In his brief reply of 21 February, Vallabhbhai Patel, sympathising with Nehru for his sense of oppression, sought to dissuade him from resigning the prime ministership. He offered to see Nehru at his convenience and discuss various matters.

22. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
21 February, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Thank you for your letter of 21 February which I received on my return home after 7 p.m. We have been having so many engagements and so much work that it is hardly possible to meet each other. I would have come to your place even this evening after 7, if I had not had three or four engagements, one after the other, this evening. Some of these engagements were from people coming from outside Delhi. Early tomorrow morning at 7 I am going to Nilokheri and returning rather late in the evening. I do not know if that will be a suitable time to see you. It would be rather late. Apart from that I have fixed tomorrow night for drawing up a statement for Parliament about Bengal. I intend making this statement on the 23rd forenoon in Parliament. I have asked a number of Secretaries, including the Chief Secretary of West Bengal, to meet me here.

I shall of course take no step without full discussion with you. There are very few persons one can discuss these matters with, and I have not mentioned this

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 6-9.

to anyone else except Rajendra Babu whom I sent a copy of my last letter to you. I shall not rush into any action. But time does not stop for us, nor do events stay their course. I have a feeling, ever growing stronger, that something striking must be done to meet this terrible situation in Bengal. I have no illusions about my ability to stop the course of fate, if fate it is, or break the chain of action and circumstances. Yet I have, at the same time, some faith in myself, if I throw myself into a task with all the strength and energy that I possess. To my mind the biggest task of the day is this East and West Bengal matter. It is big, because of the fate of East and West Bengal and of the tens of millions who inhabit them. It is even bigger than that, for it overshadows and tends to overwhelm the whole of India.

There is this positive feeling in me that I must devote myself to this Bengal problem and do so on the spot. The problem itself demands that. But in addition to that, the memory of Bapu and all he did in Bengal comes back to me and I grow restless and unhappy.

That is the positive urge. It is just conceivable that some action of this kind on my part, with its dramatic implications, will strike the imagination of people both in West Bengal and East Bengal, and make them pause and think. That will not solve the problem, but it will gain precious time and time gained for thought might well make all the difference.

The negative urge is a feeling that I have largely exhausted my utility in New Delhi. Or, to put it in another way, that I can make myself more useful by other activity. I do a hundred odd jobs a day and they may have a certain value. But essentially they are very secondary and first things must come first in a crisis.

I wrote to you yesterday about the growing indiscipline and irresponsibility of many members of Parliament. That by itself, though distressing, is not of vital consequence. We have to work with the material available and it is not very creditable to blame others if things go wrong. What is more important is the difference in outlook between Parliament as a whole and me. They put up with me because of their friendliness towards me and their affection and a certain past record and habit of doing so. But they go farther and farther away from me in mind and heart. This produces unhappiness all round and frustration and work suffers. You and I have repeatedly drawn attention to some of these matters and we have no doubt produced some effect at the time. But the basic urges come up again and again and we face the same difficulty. Hence I feel that it is good for Parliament as well as for me to remove this sense of frustration from either of us and to give each other a certain freedom of action within a limited field. It may well be that some rather dramatic step that I might take might affect the situation here also for the better. It would make people realise that we are face to face with grim reality not only in Bengal but in our public life generally. We dare not be irresponsible or function with gusts of passion when the coolest thought allied to firmness is required. People take too many things for granted and while they do

so, the ground slips from underneath their feet and a growing despair and resentment seizes the country.

From the Congress point of view also the step I suggest for myself will shake Congressmen up and draw them out of their petty wrangles and jealousies. It is time we all shook ourselves up. We grow too complacent and smug. We want a little fire in our minds and in our activity.

Thus from every point of view, my proposal appears to be justified. If you think that it may cause some difficulty in our other work here, you are partly justified, but not much. Things carry on by their own momentum and you will be there to guide them in any event. I hate to cast any additional burden on you. But, from another aspect, I feel that ultimately that burden might be lighter if I adopt this course. I shall not be going away altogether. I shall be within hail and I shall come back when I feel that my work justifies it. A few months will not make much difference here. They might well make a difference elsewhere and in the minds of the people.

It is not good enough for me to function, as I want to function, by continuing as Prime Minister. The effect I wish to produce would be to some extent nullified.

As I wrote to you yesterday, I had in mind a slight reconstruction of Government. In view of what I have said, it would not be proper for me to undertake it. In the natural course a new Council of Ministers ought to be formed whether they are all of the old guard or not. I have to put my resignation before the President and he has to ask someone to form a Cabinet.

The other matter that I wrote to you about was the Planning Commission. In my present mood I would rather be free of that also, so as to devote myself unhampered to the Bengal problem. But I realise that this would create new difficulties and so, if others are agreeable, I would be prepared to serve on the Planning Commission. I view this Planning Commission as a top-ranking body with a great deal of authority and prestige, though with no executive power.

I am waiting for Liaquat Ali Khan's reply about our joint visit to East and West Bengal. His reply will affect my plans. But to a large extent they are independent of his reply. I can do much in Bengal, even though he does not cooperate in it.²

For the present I should like to wait and see developments and get more news. But I am terribly afraid of a flood of refugees coming over as soon as the gates are open. So delay is bad. I should like to give ten days from now or at the most a fortnight.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

2. The personal crisis and the thought of resignation were postponed for the time being because of Liaquat Ali Khan's rejection of the proposal for a joint visit.

23. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi

February 21, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

I saw Nikhil Sen² for a few minutes today. Day after tomorrow morning I propose to make a statement in Parliament about the situation in East and West Bengal. The problem before us is of an appalling magnitude and in human terms almost insoluble. On the one hand most Hindus in East Pakistan will probably want to come over. On the other hand it is quite impossible for us to think in terms of absorbing and rehabilitating millions of additional displaced persons. It seems to me that we must insist on Hindus in East Bengal being given full security to their satisfaction and being settled there. Of course we have to give shelter and help to terrorised refugees.

My mind is greatly troubled and I feel that I must devote myself primarily to this problem and to visit West and East Bengal. As you know, I have telegraphed to Liaquat Ali Khan like this.

While we must put up some kind of an organisation to deal with these refugees who are coming over we must keep in mind that the only solution of the problem is in East Bengal and not outside it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Nikhil Sen had worked with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

24. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi

February 21, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I am sending to Vallabhbhai. This is really the second in the series.² I wrote to him at some length last night. But the attached letter covers much the same ground, though rather briefly, and it will give you some idea of how I feel and what I want to do. This is no sudden gust of emotion. It is a piling up of agony for a considerable time past. Being weak, I could not

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *ante*, items 21 and 22.

come to a decision and tried to escape the logical consequences of my thought. But two things happened. One, the behaviour of many members of Parliament to many things. To this might be added the growing disruption of the Congress, as evidenced by what is happening in my own province. The second and more urgent and vital reason is Bengal. We appear to face there what might be considered an insoluble problem. No Hindu in East Bengal at the present moment has any feeling of security and, given the chance, a vast number of them will come over. It is difficult to push them back and it is impossible to absorb them or rehabilitate them. They must go back and they can only go back, if they have a sensation of security. How to produce this? Of course, it is essential that on our side there is some kind of peace and order.

I even thought that war itself is better than this tame submission to fate and tragedy. And yet I know well that war does not solve problems and can only make them worse.

I am sure that you will understand how I feel and will appreciate my feeling.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

25. To Mohanlal Saksena¹

New Delhi
February 21, 1950

My dear Mohanlal,

Your letter of the 21st. I have seen Nikhil Sen for a few minutes today. The situation in Bengal is appallingly difficult. I referred to it today in the Cabinet and we should discuss it fully in Cabinet when you are present.

It seems to me quite impossible for us to think in terms of any large scale migration to India or an exchange of populations. On the other hand it is equally impossible not to help those who escape to our country in a terrorised condition. The problem appears to be insoluble. Yet solutions have to be found.

I am going to make a statement in Parliament day after tomorrow morning. Tomorrow I am going to Nilokheri. If you could send me some kind of a note tomorrow evening it would help me to draft my statement.

I am so much exercised over this problem that I want to go to both West and East Bengal myself. I made this suggestion to Liaquat Ali Khan in a letter to him.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

26. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have not so far had any reply to my telegrams Nos. 30577 and 30578 dated the 20th February. As the matter is most urgent and delay of even a few hours might cost precious human lives, I would request an immediate reply. I hope my suggestion for fact-finding joint commissions will be accepted and also the proposal that you and I should pay a joint visit to both Bengals in early March.²

1. Undated. File No. 1 (10)-BL/50, M.E.A.
2. Liaquat Ali turned down the proposals for the appointment of fact-finding commissions and a joint tour of Bengal by the two Prime Ministers. He recommended greater facilities to the two Deputy High Commissioners of India and Pakistan to undertake a survey.

27. The Shadow of Tragedy¹

During the last five weeks and more especially during the last two weeks, this House and the country generally have lived under the shadow of tragedy. That sense of tragedy was all the greater because accurate news was lacking and all kinds of rumours and statements, often greatly exaggerated, were afloat. Government, on whom the responsibility lay to deal with this developing situation in Bengal, had to bear a heavy burden of anxiety. For the moment, all other issues important as they were, became secondary before this succession of events in Bengal and Government explored every avenue of dealing with this situation. I must apologise to the House for not giving much information on this subject at an earlier stage. But the very gravity of the situation and lack of accurate news led me to postpone making a statement. I was anxious that I should not make any wrong statement of fact or say anything which might worsen a situation which was bad enough already.

The press in India, like elsewhere, has its faults and some periodicals occasionally are very irresponsible in what they write. But I should like to say that in this matter of events in East and West Bengal during the last two weeks, the Indian press has exercised commendable restraint, and I should like to express my gratitude to them for it. Unfortunately, a similar restraint has not been observed

1. Statement made in Parliament on 23 February 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, (Official Report)*, Vol. 1, Part-II, 28th January-23rd February 1950, pp. 749-755.

by the press in Pakistan.² I have been amazed to read accounts and comments in the Pakistan press which are not only grossly exaggerated, but often fantastic in their untruth and in their appeals to passion and bigotry. Ever since these troubles started, it has been our earnest desire to find out the facts, because it is impossible to understand the situation, and much less to deal with it, without knowing what has actually happened or is happening. Even today we are making every effort to induce the Government of Pakistan to cooperate with us in finding out the true facts wherever any troubles have occurred, whether in West or East Bengal. We do not want an elaborate enquiry which would take time. All we want is to have accurate information of the existing situation so that both Governments might take adequate measures to deal with it. It must always be remembered that the evil we have to face is a continuing one and its possible consequences are too appalling to contemplate.

Calcutta was the scene of trouble and we deplore greatly what happened there. I think it can be said with truth that this trouble was dealt with firmly and effectively and stopped with some rapidity. I should like to express our appreciation of the manner and the firmness and impartiality with which the Chief Minister of West Bengal dealt with the situation in Calcutta. Calcutta is a great city open to anyone who wishes to go there and see things for himself. Nothing can remain hidden there. But East Bengal is very different in this respect and news travels slowly. A kind of iron curtain fell on East Bengal during these days which prevented accurate information from coming through except in dribbles.

The problem before us is much too serious for any of us to seek to make political propaganda out of it, for it affects the future of tens of millions of people both in India and Pakistan. I have endeavoured, therefore, to exercise as much restraint as I could and to try to view the situation objectively. I have little doubt that what has happened in East Bengal is far more serious than what happened in Calcutta or one or two other places in West Bengal. There is no comparison between them. In any event, however this may be, it is right that we should know the facts of what occurred both in West and East Bengal.

I shall now give the facts that have come to our knowledge. For months past, persistent anti-India and anti-Hindu propaganda has been carried on in the press,

2. Though the communal disturbances in Calcutta in February 1950 had been brought under control within days the East Bengal press published exaggerated reports about sufferings of Muslims under such banner headlines as "Orgy of murder, arson and loot", and "Inhuman oppression of the peace-loving Muslims." One newspaper announced that 100 Muslims were killed in Calcutta. The propaganda was directed against the Hindus of East Bengal who were condemned as fifth columnist. On 9 February 1950, the *Azad* wrote: "Real enemies of Pakistan are Hindus". Bengali and Urdu leaflets calling for avenging atrocities committed in Calcutta were distributed. All this resulted in communal riots in East Bengal leading to a migration of thousands of Hindus into West Bengal, Assam and Tripura.

platform and sometimes on the radio in East Bengal, inciting the masses against the Hindus in East Bengal, who have been called “*kafirs*,” fifth columnists, a danger to their State and so on. A similar and virulent propaganda was carried on in western Pakistan, chiefly in regard to Kashmir, and, in the name of religion, hatred and the spirit of violence and war were spread.

On the 20th December an incident occurred in village Kalshira in the Bagerhat sub-division of Khulna district in East Bengal. A police party went to arrest an alleged communist suspect and, finding him absent, began to assault the inmates of the house, including the women. Attracted by the cries of the women, the neighbours ran to the scene and there was a free fight between the police party and the villagers. One policeman was killed and another died subsequently of injuries. Two days later, the police, assisted by the Ansars and other rowdy elements, attacked not only that village, but 22 other neighbouring villages, which are mostly inhabited by members of the *Namasudra* community. There was arson and looting on a large scale, men were murdered and women ravished. There were also forcible conversions and desecration of places of worship. The residents of those villages could not escape from the scene because of a rigid cordon maintained by the armed police and others. Even news could not come through. After about three weeks of this occurrence, some of the afflicted people of these villages managed to evade the cordon and crossed into West Bengal. The West Bengal Government immediately drew the attention of the East Bengal Government to this grave situation and asked for information. No reply was received to this or to a personal letter written by the Chief Minister of West Bengal to the Premier of East Bengal. The migration from the Khulna area to West Bengal continued, in spite of obstructions, and up to the 14th February 24, 239 men, women and children had come from the affected areas.

Somewhat similar incidents took place in Nachole in Rajshahi district in East Bengal, an area largely inhabited by Santhals. Following a clash between the police and the Santhals, many villages were ravaged and up to the 3rd February 700 Santhal families had crossed over to West Bengal.

The presence of all these refugees and their stories of ill-treatment shocked and excited the public in West Bengal. As a result, some isolated incidents took place in Murshidabad town and two or three villages nearby. The situation, however, was rapidly brought under control. There was no death, and only a few cases of injury. There was also a small exodus to East Bengal; the figures are not at present known. Relief was given to the sufferers who were not many in number. The refugees from Khulna and their accounts of what they had suffered created considerable excitement in Calcutta and on the 4th February a series of incidents began there. There were stray assaults on some Muslims and a number of Muslim *bustees* were burnt. The police took action immediately and made arrests on every occasion. The situation improved and there were no incidents on the 6th and 7th February. On the 8th two Hindus were stabbed in front of a mosque in Ultadanga

in north Calcutta. There was then a recrudescence of trouble and arson and looting took place in certain Muslim localities. There were also cases of stabbing of Muslims. The police were given orders to shoot at sight any person committing arson, loot or stabbing and curfew was imposed in the affected areas. Military patrols were also brought out. From the 10th February onwards the disturbances were greatly reduced in volume and were ultimately fully controlled.

Owing to these disturbances there was considerable panic in some of the Muslim areas of Calcutta and a number of them left their houses and went to other parts of Calcutta, notably the Park Circus area. According to a house-to-house census 26,112 persons moved from their houses to other parts of Calcutta. Subsequently a large number of these returned to their houses.

The actual figures of casualties, both in Calcutta and Murshidabad area, were as follows:

Calcutta area (upto 17th February):

Hindus		Muslims	
Injured	Deaths	Injured	Deaths
83	11	123	20

Rest of Bengal—including Howrah—(upto 19th February):

Hindus		Muslims	
Injured	Deaths	Injured	Deaths
27	5	123	52

Among the Hindus one was killed and 12 injured by police firing.

A large number of arrests were made. In Calcutta 979 Hindus, 91 Muslims and six others were arrested. In the rest of Bengal 360 Hindus and 75 Muslims were arrested.

On the 9th February a conference of Chief Secretaries of East and West Bengal took place at Dacca. On the 10th February, while this conference was taking place, there was a demonstration inside the Secretariat at Dacca by the East Bengal Secretariat employees. A procession was formed by these people and this ended in a meeting at Victoria Park, Dacca. As the meeting broke up, rioting, looting, murder and arson started and spread all over Dacca city. This widespread rioting continued on the next day. On the 12th February a crowd of Hindu passengers at the Karimtolla airport near Dacca was attacked by an armed mob and a large number of intending passengers, including women and children, were killed or seriously wounded. This tragedy took place within stone's throw of the Karimtolla military headquarters and in the presence of Pakistan armed guards.

It is not possible for us to know exactly how long these disturbances continued in Dacca or to give accurate figures about deaths or other destruction. Estimates of deaths in Dacca city alone vary from one thousand or more to six hundred.

It is still more difficult to have facts about the mofussil areas in East Bengal. But it is clear that there have been disturbances in several widely spread towns in East Bengal, as for instance Narayanganj,³ Chittagong,⁴ Feni,⁵ Rajshahi,⁶ Barisal⁷ and Mymensingh.⁸ No correct news has been supplied by the East Bengal Government about these incidents, although the Chief Secretaries' conference had agreed that there should be an exchange of authenticated news.⁹ Passengers who have flown from Calcutta to Dacca and back have reported that at many places along the route they saw burnt houses in the villages. For some days refugees from East Bengal were not allowed to come to West Bengal. Passengers in trains were taken down at intermediate stations and the arrival of empty trains in West Bengal caused a fresh spate of rumours and great excitement. Later these restrictions were removed to some extent. But even then any person showing injuries was not allowed to come.

Figures of evacuation, both by train and air, from East Bengal to West Bengal and vice versa are as follows.

(These do not include the figures from Khulna district given previously):

From Dacca to Calcutta by air between 12 and 21 February	}	about 3,500 persons
By train from East Bengal to Calcutta between February 13th and February 20th		16,000 persons
Total	...	<u>19,500 persons</u>

3. On 6 January 1950, 60,000 maunds of raw jute worth about 15 lakhs of rupees was burnt in a jute-baling company in Narayanganj.
4. Disturbances in Chittagong town started on 12 February and continued till 18 February.
5. Disturbances started in Feni on 12 February with the looting of some shops and attacks on Hindus and continued for two days. A number of houses were burnt, as a result 4,000 refugees were in camps in Feni College.
6. Four policemen were reported killed in a clash between the police and a Santhal mob in a village under Police Station Nachole in Rajshahi in January. It was stated that the Santhals, led by some local communists, were agitating for one-third of the share of their produce. When a police party went to the village it was attacked by the mob. The police opened fire to disperse the mob. Widespread disturbances, loot, murder and arson in some villages of Rajshahi district continued even after a month, resulting in large-scale migrations. This exodus was due to the forcible occupation of Hindu houses, constant intimidation and molestation of Hindu women.
7. On 13 February rumours of murder of Fazlul Haq in Calcutta and impending trouble spread in Barisal. Thirty houses and shops and a government grain godown were burnt and 14 cases of assault of which one proved fatal were reported. Arson, loot and assault and abduction of women were reported.
8. Some cases of arson and assault involving 25 casualties of which 7 were fatal were reported from Jamalpur, Kendua and Sherpur in Mymensingh district on 11 February.
9. It was agreed that the press of East and West Bengal should undertake 'not to publish any materials concerning communal happenings in the other province or state without prior reference to its own Government.'

From Calcutta to Dacca by air between 12th and 21st February	}	about 2,100 persons
From Calcutta to East Bengal by train from February 13th to 20th		
		<hr/> 3,000 persons
Total	...	<hr/> 5,100 persons

A very large proportion of the Hindu population of Dacca went into improvised camps soon after the trouble arose. These camps were exceedingly unsatisfactory. Many of these people have returned to their houses. According to the latest figures received 7,200 are still in these camps in Dacca city and 10,000 have been given shelter in private houses in Hindu areas.

We have received a large number of telegrams, letters and other accounts from individuals who have come from various parts of East Bengal, giving particulars of ghastly occurrences. I have refrained from mentioning these, as it usually happens that people who have been through great ordeals cannot give a correct account and are apt to exaggerate. Such figures as I have given above have been tested and are likely to be near the truth. It seems to me clear however that many parts of East Bengal have witnessed tragedy on a considerable scale.

Government received the first reports of the Khulna incidents on the 20th January. Further reports showed that the situation was a serious one and that large numbers of refugees were coming to West Bengal. Protests were lodged with the Government of Pakistan repeatedly, but they led to no results. Since the trouble began in Dacca, Government tried to be in constant touch with the West Bengal Government and with their Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca. Our Deputy High Commissioner, however, was not for some days in a position to give any first hand information because, on the advice of the Pakistan authorities, he did not go out of his house. His house and office however were full of hundreds of refugees.

On the 17th of February I sent a telegram to the Pakistan Prime Minister suggesting that full facilities should be given by each Government to the Deputy High Commissioner of the other Government for freely visiting the affected areas and ascertaining the facts. Such facilities, I might mention, have already been accorded to the Deputy High Commissioner for Pakistan in Calcutta. The Pakistan High Commissioner was also in Calcutta for some days. I further suggested to the Pakistan Prime Minister that there should be a rapid survey of the situation in the two Bengals by two fact-finding commissions, each of which would consist of two representatives nominated by East and West Bengal respectively, of whom one would be a Minister. I expressed the hope that these commissions would start functioning within a week. I communicated to the Prime Minister of Pakistan some reports also which we had been receiving about events in East Bengal.

On the 18th February I received a reply from the Pakistan Prime Minister. He agreed to give full facilities to our Deputy High Commissioner to visit areas alleged to be affected. Regarding the proposal to send joint commissions, he said that he would consult the Government of East Bengal. He suggested further that the two Governments should issue a declaration that they did not favour and would do everything possible to discourage any movement of refugees.

On the 20th February I telegraphed to him again pressing for the acceptance of my suggestion for joint fact-finding commissions. In another telegram I pointed out again the gravity of the situation and suggested that he and I should visit the affected areas together. This was to be in addition to the joint fact-finding commissions. I have just received a reply to these telegrams, in which the Prime Minister of Pakistan says that in his opinion no joint commission is necessary or desirable. He also thinks that a joint tour by him and me of East and West Bengal would produce no useful results. He thinks that our High Commissioners should be able to supply full information after enquiry. He adds that according to his information the situation has become normal.

Our High Commissioner in Karachi has gone to Dacca. I might mention that our Deputy High Commissioner at Dacca wanted to proceed to Barisal to study the situation there. The East Bengal Government have informed him that they have to consult local authorities before they can give a definite reply and this will take four days. It will thus appear that even the permission given to our High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner to visit various parts of East Bengal is not being given effect to.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal made an offer of sending relief parties to the camps in Dacca with medicines and other supplies. The East Bengal Government have expressed their inability to meet this request.

It seems to me essential and imperative that true facts should be known. Charges and counter-charges are made and excitement and passion mount up. In the circumstances it is not enough for each Government to issue its own version of the facts. It was for this reason that I had made some suggestion to the Prime Minister of Pakistan which he has rejected. I still think that the fullest opportunities for investigation must be provided and we have been and are prepared to give these opportunities. In addition to the proposals I have made I am suggesting that representatives of the International Red Cross, accompanied by Ministers or officials of each Government, should visit the affected areas in each province.

I hope to keep the House informed of developments in Bengal. We are in constant touch with the West Bengal Government and with our Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca and gradually more facts are coming to our knowledge. It is clear that a major tragedy has occurred and it is the duty of both the Governments concerned to restore normality and to succour those who have suffered. I can say that the Government of West Bengal have endeavoured to do this duty with a large measure of success.

While the present situation is serious enough and demands constant attention and action, the future problems that it raises are exceedingly grave. There have been vague talks of exchange of populations and of vast numbers of refugees crossing from one country to another. Looked at from any point of view, these suggestions are totally unrealistic. Tens of millions of people cannot be uprooted and transported to distant places. It is true that in Punjab vast migrations took place, bringing infinite suffering in their train. They took place because we became the play of elemental forces and two newly formed Governments had suddenly to face this crisis. There is no such excuse now and both India and Pakistan should have the strength and capacity to perform their primary function of giving security and confidence to their people, whoever they might be. It is not our desire to interfere with the domestic affairs of Pakistan. But it would be idle to say that we do not experience sympathy and anxiety when large numbers of people in Pakistan have to undergo suffering and indignity in an extreme form. We have all along discouraged any migrations and we wish to do so still. But if terror-stricken people come to us for refuge, we cannot say no to them or refuse to give them the help of which they stand in need. India and Pakistan may have become two different countries, politically and otherwise separate from each other. But large numbers of people live in each country, who have intimate associations and often relationships with people in the other country, and if they are in trouble, they look to this friendship and relationship.

It seems clear to us that a very large number, if not all, of the members of the minority community of Pakistan have lost all sense of security and live in fear and apprehension. It is the bounden duty of Pakistan, as it is ours also, to inspire confidence so that each country's nationals can live their normal and peaceful lives and practise their vocations. If a country is unable to inspire that confidence and its own citizens are compelled by circumstances to run away to some other place for safety, then the government of that country has failed to discharge its duties.

There is another aspect of this problem, which affects us, even apart from the humanitarian and other reasons. Communal tragedy in one country produces its reactions on the other. If tragedies occur in Pakistan, they powerfully affect the people of our country and we cannot remain indifferent to them. It is for the Government of Pakistan to consider seriously what the consequences are likely to be, if they are unable to give peace and security to their own citizens. Those consequences happen to affect India also and we cannot remain indifferent to them.

A situation has arisen when there is an incentive to evil-doing. There is not only the incentive to false propaganda meant to incite people, but there is also the incentive that the evil-doer who indulges in loot and arson can get away with it and even profit by it. If a government is serious in putting down this evil, it must punish the evil-doer and compensate the sufferer. Then only will there be some check.

I should like to make an appeal to our own people in this grave moment of crisis. If they desire that Government should take effective action whenever necessary, they must realise that perfect order and security must prevail in India. There are anti-social elements and communal groups who, in spite of their declared opposition, really function in tune with the intense communalism of Pakistan. These elements have to be checked, because they bring disrepute to our people and weaken the country. Because of the very seriousness of the situation, we have to remain calm and determined and not to indulge in loose language or action, which is improper and harmful.

We have to face many serious problems in our country. Among these is that of Kashmir and the House knows how much importance I attach to it, because behind it lie vital questions of principle and moral behaviour among nations. This Kashmir matter is being discussed elsewhere. To me it appears that what has happened in Kashmir and what is happening in East Bengal are all inter-linked and we cannot separate them. We want peace in this country and with Pakistan, and I have repeatedly made that offer. But peace and goodwill are not going to come by some superficial arrangement, when these deep-seated causes of trouble and conflict continue. Today the Bengal problem has first priority, because it governs so many other problems. For my part I would like to devote myself chiefly to these particular issues of Bengal and Kashmir which, as I have said, are linked together in my mind. If the methods we have suggested are not agreed to, it may be that we shall have to adopt other methods. I am deeply troubled by recent events and my mind is constantly trying to find out how best I can serve these causes and discharge my duty and my obligation to my people.¹⁰

10. In his first draft of the statement Nehru had hinted at resignation. "It may be that I can serve these causes better by some other method than is open to me at present or in some other capacity than I occupy. I am deeply troubled by recent events and my mind is constantly trying to find out how best I can discharge my duty and my obligation to my people." Vallabhbhai Patel requested Nehru to revise this paragraph as it would cause bewilderment in the mind of the people. So Nehru rewrote the last two sentences of the statement as found in the text.

28. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

You were good enough to agree to give all facilities to our Deputy High Commissioner at Dacca to tour areas alleged to be affected by communal rioting in East Bengal, I am informed however that when the Deputy High Commissioner approached the East Bengal Government for permission for facilities to visit Barisal

1. New Delhi, 23 February 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

he was informed that local authorities would have to be consulted and this would take four days' time. You will I am sure agree that such a reply does in effect amount to denial of facilities. Grateful if you would impress on the East Bengal Government the urgency of dealing with requests from the Deputy High Commissioner and giving him facilities without delay. All manner of reports about the situation in Barisal have been reaching India....

29. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Your telegram No. 916 dated 22nd February reached me on 23rd morning. I must confess to a sense of deep disappointment and great surprise that you should regard appointment of joint commissions as suggested by me likely to create complications for administration, interfere with work of rehabilitation and revive bitterness which is subsiding. In the first place, the commissions were not meant to make detailed enquiries but only to attempt a general assessment of situation with a view to overall and effective preventive action.² Even more important was the objective of restoration of confidence. Surely, commission functioning in East Bengal which included representatives of East Bengal Government, including Minister, could hardly hurt susceptibilities either of Government of Pakistan or East Bengal or of majority community in East Bengal. Seeing that we were prepared to reciprocate by allowing similar commission to function in West Bengal, any inference that either Government was surrendering its sovereignty or permitting interference with its internal affairs should have given way to realisation most vital to restoration of confidence as well as to return of normal conditions on both sides, that purely legalistic considerations had been abandoned for cooperation in solving what is a common problem of far-reaching importance.

Your reminder that our tour of East and West Punjabs had proved futile does not coincide with my impression of effect of that tour. If that tour did not fulfil expectations, this was due primarily to fact that tide of passion and human movement on both sides was already running too high. I should have thought that joint visit by us now when, whatever future might hold, large-scale migrations through panic are only a probability, would have been fruitful of result that we both have in view. I still feel that both suggestions, namely for joint commission and for our joint

1. New Delhi, 24 February 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. On 23 February, Liaquat Ali had written that fact-finding commissions "drag on...keep resentment and feelings of recrimination alive...degenerate into a fault-finding commission." He said that the Chief Secretaries of both East and West Bengal had rejected the proposal as unsound and undesirable on administrative grounds.

visit to East and West Bengal deserve immediate acceptance in larger interest of India and Pakistan. I can only repeat that present situation is pregnant with even greater tragedy than overtook the two Punjabs in 1947. If owing to other preoccupations you cannot undertake brief tour with me in Bengal, I would in any event like to go there myself.³ Any Minister of the Pakistan Government or East Bengal Government could accompany me. Visit to affected areas by High Commissioners and their Deputies, although useful, cannot, in my opinion, meet the exigencies of the situation.

I understand that Pakistan Red Cross have advised postponing action on suggestion by Indian Red Cross to send India-Pakistan joint Red Cross delegation of six members, with an International Red Cross Committee's representative as observer if available, to report to respective Governments the real situation. I should have thought that visit by group representing humanitarian organisation would have been welcomed and would urge that Pakistan Red Cross reconsider its decision. In any case, there should be no objection to International Red Cross sending representatives to both Bengals who could be accompanied by Ministers and/or officials of two Governments. I am approaching Chairman of Organisation in Geneva with request to undertake this work.

I am sorry that you should think that I have consciously introduced any recrimination in this correspondence.⁴ I have kept it on as friendly a level as I could because my purpose is not recrimination but cooperation. What I said regarding Government of East Bengal was based on the best information available to me. If opportunities for ascertaining facts by a body which would inspire confidence on both sides is denied, it seems impossible to avoid situation in which each party considers the reports received by the other from its own sources as exaggerated...

3. Liaquat Ali replied in a telegram on 1 March that this was an impracticable proposition and "likely to embarrass you as much as East Bengal Government." Three Pakistani Ministers and the Indian High Commissioner had already visited the affected areas in East Bengal. He felt that "any spectacular action that may prevent emotional temperature from returning to normal should be avoided."
4. On 22 February, Liaquat Ali had cabled: "I have throughout in this correspondence avoided recrimination but since you persist in putting all blame at door of Government of East Bengal, I reproduce below one of many telegrams that I have received of happenings in your territory." This was a telegram from two retired Government servants about the situation in Karimganj based on reports of refugees. It was alleged that shops and houses owned by Muslims had been looted and burned down and many persons killed and wounded. Officials present had not intervened but when Muslims collected to defend themselves the army was said to have opened fire.

30. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi
24 February, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

In continuation of my letter dated 17 February,² I am now writing to you to convey our considered reply to your letter of 14 February. I regret the slight delay in sending this fuller reply. Apart from the important engagements to which I referred in my letter of 17 February, we have had to deal with the events which have occurred recently in East and West Bengal. These events, as you know, have dominated the situation and intimately govern future relations between India and Pakistan. I am communicating with you separately in regard to the Bengal situation.

I am glad to note that Pakistan desires most sincerely to remove all causes of friction with her neighbour, India, and to promote friendly relations, without which it is impossible for either country to achieve the full measure of its potential development. May I say that we fully reciprocate these sentiments? I am also happy that Pakistan welcomes the proposal to issue a joint declaration, the primary object of which must be to carry conviction to the people of India and Pakistan and of the whole world as to the sincerity of both Governments in renouncing war as a method of settling their disputes. "To attain this object," you say, "it is essential that there should be tangible action to match the spirit of the declaration since peoples and Governments are judged by their actions rather than by their words." I may assure you that in suggesting that we should make the declaration first and, immediately afterwards, consider ways and means of settling outstanding disputes between our two countries, it was not my intention that action should not be prompt and in conformity with the spirit of the declaration. Our view was, and is, that, considering the acuteness of the tension that now unfortunately exists, the psychological effect of the declaration itself would be to reassure our respective peoples that, whatever the differences between the two Governments, they would be settled peacefully and that both countries would be spared the horrors of a fratricidal war. However, I realise that a matter of this high importance could not and ought not be considered exclusively from the standpoint of either India or Pakistan. With the full consciousness of the importance to both our countries of an agreed declaration and in a spirit of sincere friendship we have considered again our original proposal and I shall now indicate what we regard as an arrangement that should be acceptable to both of us.

I do not in the least minimise either the significance or the gravity of the dispute regarding the future of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This issue, however, is already before the Security Council, and has only recently been fully debated. We feel that the Security Council, which is one of the principal organs of the United

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. See *ante*, pp. 40-42.

Nations, and has adequate authority under the Charter to deal with it, should continue to handle it. Our stand with regard to Junagadh is well known to you; I regret that we are unable to modify it.

As regards the other disputes enumerated in the *aide memoire*, namely, canal waters, evacuee property and Pakistan assets claimed by your Government from India, we agree that a settlement of these disputes shall be sought through negotiation and mediation and, if these should fail to bring a settlement, by resort to arbitration. Of course when arbitration is resorted to we shall abide by the award of any arbitral tribunal that may be set up in agreement between the two Governments.

According to my understanding, you propose that there should be one arbitral tribunal to deal with all disputes, presumably with the exception of the dispute over canal waters which you think should be referred to the International Court of Justice. We anticipate practical difficulty in one tribunal dealing with all disputes, especially when one considers the importance that you and we both attach to an early settlement of some of them. Apart from the question of time, that of the competence of the personnel has also to be taken into account. For example, the qualifications required of members of the tribunal that may be appointed to deal with the dispute over canal waters may not be the same as those required for one of the other disputes, e.g., the one relating to evacuee property. Indeed, your view that, as regards the dispute over canal waters, the International Court of Justice should be the arbitral authority itself supports the point of view that I have just expressed. I am also not in favour of inviting the Governments of three friendly countries to nominate one member each to these tribunals. In my opinion, it would be very much better to adhere to the practice adopted by both our Governments so far, namely, that each should select one arbitrator and the third should be chosen by the two Governments in agreement. Of course, when a dispute is referred to arbitration, each party must agree in advance to abide by the award to the arbitrators; or if they are not unanimous, by the decision of the majority.

I shall now deal with the suggestion for a time table. I readily agree that, ordinarily, from the date of the declaration, two months should be allowed for negotiations. But circumstances beyond the control of one or both Governments may make completion of negotiations within this period impossible. I, therefore, suggest that the two Governments may by agreement extend this period provided that the maximum period does not exceed six months. As regards the subsequent processes, namely, mediation and arbitration, I am doubtful whether it would be prudent to fix time limits in advance. About arbitration, you yourself have said that its duration would depend on the arbitrator or arbitrators. The same holds true of mediation. While speed is important, flexibility is not less so, and neither should be sacrificed to the other. Some general provision on the lines that, in the event of the mediator or mediators—in the latter case, by a majority — coming to the conclusion that the possibilities of mediation, arbitration have been exhausted, the matter must be referred to arbitration, should be sufficient.

On the basis of what I have said in the preceding parts of this letter, I suggest the following re-draft of the declaration as proposed by you in paragraph 11 of your letter:

“The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan being desirous of promoting friendship and goodwill between their peoples, hereby declare that they will not resort to war for the settlement of any existing or future disputes between them. They further agree that the settlement of such disputes shall always be sought through the peaceful methods of negotiation and mediation, and, if these should fail to bring settlement, by resort to arbitration. Differences relating to the procedure for arbitration, if not settled by agreement, shall also be referred to arbitration. They undertake that, for the settlement of all existing disputes, other than those, e.g., Kashmir, which are now before the Security Council of the United Nations, they abide by the award of an arbitral tribunal, or a recognised international agency such as the International Court of Justice. An arbitral tribunal for the settlement of a dispute shall consist of one nominee of each Government and a third chosen by the two nominees in agreement, or, failing such agreement, by the two Governments. In the event of the members of a tribunal not being unanimous, the decision of the majority shall be binding. Negotiations for the settlement of all such disputes shall begin as early as practicable. Normally the negotiations shall be completed within two months. But circumstances beyond the control of one or both Governments may make completion of negotiations within this period impossible. In such a contingency the maximum period for negotiations shall be six months. Such disputes as are not settled by negotiation shall be referred to mediation. If the mediator or mediators come to the conclusion — in the latter case by a majority — that the possibilities of mediation have been exhausted, the dispute or the unsettled points therein shall be referred to arbitration.

In pursuance of this declaration, both Governments agree that the canal waters dispute shall, if no agreement is reached by negotiation or mediation, be referred for decision to the International Court of Justice or to any other tribunal that may be agreed upon. In other disputes outstanding between them such as evacuee property, boundary disputes and claims relating to assets, both Governments agree that if no settlement is reached by negotiation or mediation the matter shall be referred to an arbitral tribunal. It is their earnest hope as well as their firm conviction that implementation of this declaration and the spirit which lies behind it will serve to promote friendly relations between the two countries and advance the cause of international peace.”

This matter has been under discussion between us for over two months now and I sincerely hope that we shall be able to reach an agreed conclusion without further delay....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

31. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

This is in continuation of my telegram 24033 dated 24th February. We had called for a full report from the Assam Government with regard to the happenings at Karimganj as soon as we saw references to them in the press. The following facts have been reported to us by the Assam Government:

Passengers of the Dacca Mail who reached Karimganj on the night of Sunday the 12th February gave out that on the way Muslims had looted the train and murdered several Hindu passengers and threw them into the river at the Bhairab Bridge. These statements caused some excitement in Karimganj town. The following morning an armed Muslim mob of about 200 faced a similar Hindu mob near the Karimganj railway station. The Sub Divisional Officer of Karimganj hurried to the spot and tried to pacify the mobs. A fight ensued in the course of which one Hindu and the town Head Constable were injured. The police then opened fire. One dead and one injured person were picked up on the spot and ten more injured persons were subsequently recovered from different parts of the town and removed to the hospital. Three of these persons died later. There was some looting and burning of shops. Extensive patrolling was immediately ordered in the disturbed area and orders under Section 144 were promulgated. Forty-eight Hindus and 12 Muslims had been arrested and property worth Rs. 20,000/- had been recovered. Since the 13th there has been no serious incident and the situation is fully under control. All precautionary measures against any further outbreak of violence have also been taken.

You will thus see that the situation as reported by the local authorities is entirely different from what has been communicated to you by persons who have apparently sent the reports from outside the disturbed area.² It is exactly with a view to getting an assessment of the true situation from persons whose words will carry conviction to both sides, that I have suggested joint surveys. However, I have communicated the details received from you to the Assam Government and asked for their comments. I would add that the incidents at Karimganj have nothing to do with the recent legislation enacted by us to expel undesirable immigrants from Assam. Karimganj is an area where there are few Muslim settlers from East Bengal.

1. New Delhi, 24 February 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. See *ante*, p. 64, fn. 4.

32. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

News continues to reach us of grave situation in East Bengal and of persistent efforts to drive out Hindus. On the other hand Pakistan radio and newspapers state that ten thousand Muslims were killed in West Bengal and property worth one crore looted. This is amazing falsehood. I have given exact figures of persons killed in Calcutta and other parts of West Bengal in my statement on 23 February before Parliament. Your High Commissioner has been in Calcutta and it is easy to make enquiries there. We have asked you to send your Ministers there to cooperate with us in investigation. I must protest very strongly against this utterly false propaganda by official radio, which must incite people in Pakistan and lead to worsening of very grave situation. It is difficult for us to give any figures or exact information about East Bengal. But we are in a position to know exactly what happened in West Bengal. Your Government has not published any figures of casualties or damage in East Bengal. Instead of this, fantastic information is given about events in West Bengal. I invite you again to have joint enquiry in both West and East Bengal.

2. You have expressed your wish that migrations from one part of Bengal to another should be sternly discouraged. I entirely agree with you. But mere expression of wish by either of us is not enough, unless we supplement it by positive action which produces confidence and security in minds of minorities. I suggest that both our Governments should announce publicly that:

- (1) They will punish those who have been guilty of disturbances, killing, arson, looting, etc.
- (2) That they will give compensation to those who have suffered from these disturbances and help in rehabilitating in their former places people who have been rendered homeless or who have migrated.
- (3) There should be intense search for looted property and those in possession of it should be asked to return it immediately or else they will be presumed to have participated in looting or receiving stolen property.
- (4) People spreading wild rumours and preaching communal hatred should be arrested. Newspapers doing this should be proceeded against.
- (5) Governments concerned will appoint committees of enquiry to enquire into disturbances and punish those guilty.

1. New Delhi, 24 February 1950. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 103-104.

3. These are some suggestions for immediate action. If this is done, we may be able to stop further deterioration and help in producing some sense of security in minorities without which there can be no normality and exodus will continue.

4. I would request you to contradict statements made by Pakistan radio and press about casualties in West Bengal.

33. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi

February 25, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

I have just received your letter of February 23rd,² for which I thank you.

Last night I sent you a telegram making certain suggestions. Some of these suggestions appear to be in line with what you have written to me and I do hope that you will be able to agree to them. It will serve little purpose for me to enter into a controversy at this critical stage. It is, I am sure, your purpose, as it is mine, to face this great problem and this great responsibility with all the strength and wisdom that we possess. We have not only to meet the immediate emergency, but we have to do so, so as to lay the foundations of a real settlement for the future in East and West Bengal. You know that in both these Bengals, innumerable Hindus and Muslims live, who have relations in the other Bengal. This should help in creating friendly and cooperative relations. In fact, when trouble arises, this very fact creates greater passion and excitement, because there is far more personal interest in the fate of one's friends and relatives across the border.

It is clear that passions have been roused and there is an atmosphere of fear all round. It is clear also that it is quite impossible to think of exchange of populations or large migrations. Therefore, the only possible way is to create that sense of security and confidence, both in East and West Bengal in the minds of minorities. It is true that after what has happened, this cannot be done suddenly or completely. But steps can be taken, which help in bringing this about.

It is some of these steps that I suggested in my last telegram to you.

While it may be true that fact-finding commissions tend to become fault-finding commissions, it is also true that it is difficult to grip the situation or to satisfy people, unless broad facts are placed before them in some authoritative manner which convinces them. My own idea was not to send any commission of enquiry as such, but rather a mission, which would look at the broad facts and report, and which

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Liaquat Ali had expressed the extreme urgency for resolving the situation in the two Bengals. "Nevertheless, we as heads of the two Governments concerned, must take the steps best calculated to help."

would also be in the nature of a goodwill mission. The mere fact of these people going round would help in many ways. We can give them any name you like.

Personally I feel that I could be of service if I could go to West and East Bengal in any capacity. I intend going to West Bengal in a few days' time.

May I repeat here what I said in my telegram to you that both Governments should publicly announce that they will punish the guilty and compensate the sufferers and take upon themselves the task of rehabilitating, in their former places, all those who have been rendered homeless or who have recently migrated. Punishing the guilty means a search for looted property and a warning to those, who possess it, that they will be liable to punishment unless they return it within a brief period. People spreading wild rumours and preaching communal hatred should be proceeded against, as also newspapers.

There are two other matters which I think important and which should be included in some announcement. One of these is the abduction of women wherever this has occurred. It must be made clear that Governments will try their utmost to recover these women. The other matter is forcible conversion. As you know, this excites people's passions greatly and so we must not only fully express ourselves strongly against it, but clearly say that this cannot be recognised.

These are some ideas which occurred to me. They are, by no means, exhaustive. But if some such thing is said by both Governments and earnestly acted upon, I have little doubt that we would go a long way towards controlling the present drift towards catastrophe.

I entirely agree with you that minorities should look to their own Governments for protection.³ But what is to be done, when they lose confidence in it completely? It is that confidence that we have to create.

There are many other matters which I should like to place before you, but for the moment I wish to avoid controversial topics and to concentrate on the immediate steps to be taken.

I have not sent you any detailed reply to your previous letter about a joint no-war declaration by India and Pakistan. This is partly due to my being overwhelmed with urgent and immediate problems relating to the Bengal situation. Also you will appreciate that we have to get hold of this present situation in Bengal before we can effectively proceed with other matters. I hope, however, to send a reply to you fairly soon.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Liaquat Ali had written that the fundamental principle should be that the minority communities should look to their own Government for redressal of their wrongs and not to the Government across the border. Both the Governments of India and Pakistan should make themselves publicly responsible for rehabilitation of the victims of rioting and disturbances.

34. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have already drawn your attention to fantastic and grossly exaggerated accounts appearing in Pakistan press and radio about happenings in Bengal and to the dangers of the press on either side publishing such accounts and thus exciting passions. It seems to me imperative that the press must be checked. Otherwise all our other efforts are likely to fail. We are dealing with this matter on our side and I trust that you will take effective and urgent action also.²

1. New Delhi, 26 February 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali replied on 1 March that even though the press enjoyed considerable freedom in India and Pakistan, there had been bad instances of false news and objectionable comment in the press in both the countries. He drew in particular Nehru's attention to leading articles in *The Hindustan Times*. He said that he had periodically asked his Information Minister to impress upon the press the need for utmost restraint and moderation and to make it clear that if limits of legitimate comments were exceeded action would be taken according to the law.

35. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
27 February, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

I enclose an anonymous note that I have received. I do not attach importance to anonymous letters, but from some other sources also I learn that some people are thinking in terms of armed raids into Pakistan territory from West Bengal. It is obvious to the stupidest person that any such thing would be very injurious both to the minorities in East Bengal and to us. *Dawn*, the Karachi newspaper, has in fact been writing about a great conspiracy in Calcutta which is aimed ultimately at these border raids. Any such thing will put an end to our case in East Bengal as well as Kashmir and we shall then become just aggressors in the eyes of the United Nations and elsewhere.

I am sending this paper to you, not because I attach importance to it, but because every precaution must be taken against such ideas and the possibility of any action.

1. J.N. Collection.

Maulana Azad feels that we should have a conference between representatives of Pakistan and India to consider the East Bengal situation. I have no objection to this conference and no doubt some time or other it will have to be held. I think that just at present it is rather premature. Maulana thinks that peace will not be restored fully till minorities are represented in the Cabinets of East and West Bengal. This is an old proposal which somehow has never taken shape. I should like your reactions to it. If this could be done, I have no doubt that it will have good results. Again, it is a little difficult perhaps to do this now, though the proposal could be made if you agree.

I am writing to you separately that I shall be reaching Calcutta on the 5th March. That is the day when the Hindu Mahasabha has proclaimed as 'East Bengal Day'. I hope you will explain both to the newspapers and the public that no such demonstration should take place on that day.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

36. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have just read a report of your address to a press conference in Karachi today.² This has greatly distressed me. It is of course open to you to hold your own opinions and to draw any inferences from any facts and while I differ from you in these opinions and inferences,³ I do not wish to enter into controversy in regard to them. But I must express my surprise that you should have referred to our Deputy Prime Minister's speech in the way you have done.⁴ That speech, if read as a whole, would have conveyed an entirely different impression to you. Your quotations are completely incorrect and give a distorted version of what he said.⁵

1. New Delhi, 27 February 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali Khan told a press conference in Karachi on 27 February 1950 that his Government's policy towards India was "live and let live", "but if India wants war she will find us fully prepared... I certainly think it is a threat."
3. Liaquat Ali replied on 1 March that he had described objectively the genesis and course of disturbances in the two Bengals.
4. Liaquat Ali had said that during his visit to Calcutta on 15 January Patel referred to the communal disturbances of 1946 in terms which could not but encourage irresponsible elements among Hindus in their antagonism to Pakistan. In fact, Patel went to Calcutta in connection with communist agitation where he condemned lawlessness and appealed for cooperation with the police in the restoration of peace.
5. Liaquat Ali had replied: "My quotations were taken verbatim from uncontradicted version of his speech published in . . . Calcutta edition of *Amrita Bazar Patrika* dated January 16th."

2. I am particularly surprised at your reference to my statement before Parliament⁶ here. That statement was restrained and there was no element of threat.⁷ As I have written to you repeatedly, I am earnestly exploring all methods of lessening the tension in two Bengals and of giving some feeling of security to the minorities there. I have made several proposals to you, none of which has thus far been accepted. Meanwhile, the situation worsens. As I have written to you repeatedly, I am earnestly exploring all methods of lessening the tension in two Bengals and of giving some feeling of security to the minorities there. I have made several proposals to you, none of which has thus far been accepted. Meanwhile, the situation worsens. Do you think that your press conference address helps the cause of peace and brings confidence in the minds of the people most concerned in East or West Bengal? Do you think that the change of heart to which you refer is evidenced by what you have said at the press conference.⁸

3. I am writing to you with no desire to carry on controversy, but with a deep feeling of grief that when the fate of millions is involved, we should treat the matter in the way you have done.

6. See *ante*, pp. 54-62.

7. Liaquat Ali had written that Nehru's observation that "India shall have to adopt other methods" could have only one implication in this context. While friendly discussions were taking place, Nehru's statement in Parliament could only be interpreted as a threat.

8. Liaquat Ali had written that his object at the press conference was to detail the factual story of the origin and development of disturbances in East and West Bengal in view of the 'one-sided' observations made by Nehru in Parliament.

37. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I would like to draw your attention to the attack on the Dacca Mail going from Dacca to Calcutta yesterday. The attention of the East Bengal Premier has already been drawn to it by the West Bengal Chief Minister. This is a very serious occurrence which is having far-reaching repercussions. I shall be grateful if you will kindly send me full particulars.² You will appreciate that this attack indicates the utter lack of security of minorities prevailing in trains and elsewhere.

1. New Delhi, 27 February 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. A press note by East Bengal Government said that on the 26 February at 3-15 A.M. the Dhaka Mail was stopped between Surajnagar and Belgachi stations. Some miscreants robbed the passengers both Hindus and Muslims indiscriminately. Armed guards escorting the train immediately opened fire whereupon the criminals fled. No passenger was killed although some received injuries in the stampede that followed.

I am informed that the growing excitement in East Bengal has been intensified by Pakistan Radio and articles in *Dawn* and other papers. I have just seen *Dawn* of February 23rd which contains fantastic and utterly untrue account of alleged conspiracy and master plan of India.³ I need hardly tell you that there is not an atom of truth in this. This kind of propaganda is having the most serious results. In particular Pakistan official radio announcements are doing a great deal of harm.

3. The article in *Dawn* stated that India was losing the propaganda war regarding Kashmir, India's trade war against Pakistan had failed and dissatisfied Hindu elements under the description of communists were giving trouble to the West Bengal and the Indian Central Governments. Therefore, New Delhi 'evolved' a plan to divert world attention from Kashmir to the eastern side of the sub-continent.

38. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's Statement on Violence in Bengal¹

The sudden developments in Bengal are pregnant with possibilities of great danger and call forth every ounce of moral endeavour and energy the nation is capable of. For all our people, and more especially for Congressmen and Congress women, this is a time of testing and trial. When such times come, we can either be swept off our feet in the excitement of the moment, or we should hold to our anchor and refuse to surrender to momentary passion. Inevitably one's mind thinks of the Father of the Nation and tries to work out what he might have advised us on such an occasion. We cannot have his advice, but we can have some light from his long career of service to India and the principles he so often laid down for our guidance. Evil cannot be met by evil, nor violence by violence, for evil and violence feed each other and add to the flames of passion and vengeance. Nothing is more disastrous to the well-being as well as the good name of an individual or a nation than to let passion get control over judgement, and sentiment hush the voice of reason.

We face today a situation which is the result of numerous past actions and events. We have to see it in that context and at the same time to understand the present. The past brought the terrible happenings which followed partition and from which we have not recovered yet. That trail of conflict and suffering continues and produces crisis again and again. The present is essentially a problem of protecting minorities in East and West Bengal and any action done on one side has a tendency to react on the other. Vast numbers of people are involved in this, for the minorities, especially in East Bengal, run into many millions. It is obviously the duty of the State, whether in East or West Bengal, to give full protection and security and opportunity to its minorities. Where this is not given and confidence

1. Drafted by Nehru and issued by B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, President of the Congress, 27 February 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

fades away, then trouble arises and people look elsewhere. If anyone thinks that in order to protect a minority in the other country, he can do so by harassing and injuring a minority in his own country, he is grossly mistaken, for that way lies endangering both minorities.

The Hindu minority of East Bengal is, from all accounts, in a state of great fear and apprehension and has lost all sense of security. Hence large numbers of them want to migrate to West Bengal and many are continually coming. What are we to do about this?

Some people talk unthinkingly of exchange of populations, others discuss a huge migration of Hindus from East Bengal.² Each of these courses is infinitely difficult and cannot be considered in any logical framework of thought. Apart from their inherent difficulties, they do not even bring security to the minorities, but a continuation on an intenser scale of conflict, by which the minorities suffer most.

It is true that when the cry of help and succour comes to us, we cannot remain indifferent to it and we must devise some means to lessen the burden of sorrow on those, who are caught in the grip of events.

A few persons, belonging to communal organisations, have talked vainly and foolishly about putting an end to the partition of India. Nothing could be more unwise or more undesirable than to think in this way. The partition having been effected, has to be fully accepted. Events that have happened since have widened the gap between the two countries even more. Looked at purely from the point of view of India, any reversal of that partition or any attempt to do so would be injurious in the extreme and would bring tremendous sorrow and suffering in its train, without solving any problem. Therefore this idea must be put aside.

The only course open to us is to insist by every means in our power that minorities must have security. This may not come suddenly, because of the passions that have been roused. But if we keep cool and not give way to unreason in the present, a way out may appear. In any event we have to keep cool and refrain from any act which discredits our country and makes any subsequent action ineffective. I know that much has been done and is being done in East Bengal which is distressing in the extreme and which excites people's passions. It is just because of this that it is all the more necessary not to allow passions to rule over us but to take each step after calm deliberation and always keeping in view the principles that have governed us. Without these principles, we shall become anchorless and drift about without haven...

2. Some leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha advocated an exchange of populations on an area basis. A resolution of the Hindu Mahasabha dated 24 December 1949 stated that as a solution for the sufferings of Hindus in East Pakistan, and in view of the common factors between West Bengal and East Bengal, it was clearly in the interest of East Bengal to "align with India." Failing this they should demand "cession of two or three border districts from East Pakistan to rehabilitate our refugees there."

39. To the Chief Ministers¹

New Delhi
27 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

You are no doubt following events in East and West Bengal and you must have seen the statement I made in Parliament. I need not say how full of danger the situation is. I am still prepared to think that we might get over this danger and in any event we must make every possible effort to do so. It is true that one-sided effort may not be enough, if the other party insists on misbehaving. Nevertheless, even one-sided effort goes some way and influences the other party's behaviour. It influences third parties and that is to be considered also.

I find that the most amazing lies are being circulated by radio and newspapers in Pakistan about what happened in West Bengal. This puts me on enquiry as to how far rumours and stories we hear about events in East Bengal might not be greatly exaggerated. It is true that we have enough information at our disposal to show that conditions in East Bengal have been very bad. But we also have been able to trace many rumours spreading here which turned out to be completely baseless. We must, therefore, be very careful about believing rumours and vague reports, so long as they are not confirmed. Gradually our sources of information are growing. Our High Commissioner in Pakistan and our Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca have both been touring in East Bengal and we are getting reports from them. These reports indicate that the minority community in East Bengal had a very bad time about the middle of this month. At the same time they show that the reports we received were often exaggerated.

In the same way exaggerated and false reports in East Bengal have excited people there, and so the vicious circle goes on.

We must be prepared for all contingencies. But it is quite essential that we should all remain calm and collected and not lose our sense of proportion. Once we lose that, we become incapable of judging a situation or taking proper action. Our responsibility is great and we dare not become just tools of momentary passion, ours or the people's. We have to control them as far as we can and direct public opinion into safer channels.

I would suggest to you especially to keep in touch with editors of newspapers in your State. It is always a good thing to send for them and have informal off-the-record talks with them. Give them such real news as you possess. At the same time make it perfectly clear that we cannot tolerate the spread of rumour and vague allegation or the deliberate fostering of communal hatred. Indeed, action should be taken immediately where this takes place. We can take no risk in such matters.

1. Printed in G. Parthasarathi (ed.) *Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi, 1986), pp. 33-36.

In my statement before Parliament, I congratulated the Indian press generally on the restraint they had shown during the previous two weeks. These congratulations were, I think, justified, at any rate, in so far as a large number of newspapers were concerned. They were not justified in regard to some of them. I have noticed since that there is a tendency to forget this restraint and some cartoons and news displays and comments have been bad. I think you should point this out to your editors in friendly but firm language and make it perfectly clear that you will take necessary action, if in your opinion they give publicity to anything which might cause trouble or worsen the situation. You should seek their cooperation in controlling a difficult situation and explain to them that our capacity for any effective action is terribly weakened, if errors are committed on our side.

There was a *hartal* in Calcutta yesterday.² This was organised very irresponsibly by some people. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has rightly condemned this *hartal*. In the tension of today any person calling for a *hartal* gets a following, if for no other reason than that of fear. Any attempt at a *hartal* brings danger of trouble and conflict, as young men go about forcing people to close their shops. *Hartals* should therefore be sternly discouraged.

I had news from the Chief Minister of Bihar about very provocative speeches delivered by a prominent member of the Hindu Mahasabha.³ I am glad that the Chief Minister took immediate action. Bihar especially is an inflammable province in such matters. We had trouble enough there in November 1946.

Early in March we shall have Holi. This is always a rather difficult time from the communal point of view. When passions have been roused, it is quite easy for people to misbehave and, as we know, even a slight incident may grow to big dimensions. Therefore, every care should be taken during this period.

About the same time the Hindu Mahasabha have declared, I think March 5th, as an East Bengal Day. I do not know what their programme for the day is. But it is clear that this celebration is full of dangerous possibilities. Communal troubles on a big scale have often happened in the past by a declaration of such days and meetings and processions held then. Violent speeches are delivered, people get excited and then go and do damage. I would beg of you therefore to take every precaution to check public meetings and processions of this kind.

2. A *hartal* was observed in Calcutta on 25 February 1950 when public transport was suspended and some cases of stabbing leading to two deaths were reported. Crowds were dispersed by tear gas when they indulged in arson.
3. V.G. Deshpande, Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, told a press conference in Patna on 22 February that problems facing Hindus in East Pakistan could be solved peacefully only by a reunion of India and Pakistan or at least the accession of East Pakistan to the Indian Union. If not, the entire Hindu population should be called to India and an equal number of Muslims sent to Pakistan. Deshpande was extermned from Bihar by the Bihar Government for his provocative speeches.

It has come to my knowledge that the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. are playing an important part in the spreading of rumours and in generally inciting people. Their activities therefore should be carefully watched.⁴

I have also been informed, though I have no evidence, that there is a possibility of some mischief-makers from Pakistan helping to create trouble in India.

The next few weeks and more especially the next few days are full of dangerous possibilities and we have to be on our guard all the time. I am therefore writing to you on this subject. You will appreciate that the possible consequences of anything wrong being done are very far-reaching and catastrophic.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. The Bengal branch of the Hindu Mahasabha began to publish reports from time to time and the figures which it gave of atrocities in East Bengal were much higher than those quoted by news agencies. One such report complained that Delhi estimates 'simply played down the gravity and extent of the disorders in East Bengal.' According to the Mahasabha 'the number of Hindus killed in three weeks was 31,000 while the number wounded was much larger. The value of property looted or destroyed came to about 200 crores.' The Mahasabha followed this up with a public meeting in Calcutta at which their spokesmen demanded armed intervention in East Bengal.

40. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

In my telegram to you on February 24th I made certain suggestions. I repeated these more fully in my letter to you of February 25th. I feel that it is urgently necessary that both Governments should make some declaration in regard to the Bengal situation. Whatever our future policy may be the present policy must be clearly enunciated. My suggestions were that both Governments should announce publicly that they will compensate the sufferers among the minorities and take the responsibility of rehabilitating fully in their former places all those who have been rendered homeless or who have recently migrated. Further that they will make every effort to punish the guilty and for the recovery and return of looted property. A warning should be issued that those who possess such looted property should

1. New Delhi, 1 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

return it within a few days otherwise they will be liable to punishment. People spreading wild rumours and preaching communal hatred should be proceeded against. This will apply to newspapers also. Governments will make every effort to recover abducted women. They will not recognise forcible conversions.²

These were some of the suggestions I made to you for both Governments to declare and act upon immediately. This is by no means enough and we shall have to consider other steps also. But the definite assurances contained in some such announcement would steady the situation and prevent large-scale migrations. The responsibility for giving full protection to minorities must be of Governments concerned.

I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me have your reply to these proposals. I should like to make a statement in Parliament here on this subject soon. May I also have your permission to quote in Parliament from letters and telegrams exchanged between us.³

2. Liaquat Ali in a cable dated 1 March which crossed this telegram, agreed with all the suggestions mentioned in Nehru's earlier telegram barring the one about appointing a committee to inquire into disturbances and punishing the guilty.
3. On 2 March Liaquat Ali thought it would be prejudicial to restoration of peace if the correspondence containing heinous and uncorroborated instances of atrocities was quoted and this would logically necessitate immediate publication of the entire correspondence. Liaquat Ali felt that letters should not be released till they had reached final conclusions and a joint declaration made.

41. Safety of Refugees¹

It is not quite clear to me what the discussion would be about. What I mean to say is this. All of us, all members of this House and every Member of Government are intensely concerned with what is happening in Bengal—East and West, and as the House perhaps knows, in two or three days' time I am going there. But this particular incident that is referred to in this motion for adjournment has created concern and as my colleague mentioned, we took such steps as we could to enquire

1. Reply on a suggestion for a day being allotted to discuss the events in East and West Bengal, 2 March 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, (Official Report)*, Vol. II, Part II, 24th February-14th March 1950, p. 1073.

into it and not only that, I communicated with the Pakistan Government too. It occurred in Pakistan territory and the facts too were somewhat disputed, that is, the version that was given by some of the refugees was one and the version that was given by the Pakistan Government was another.

J.R. Kapoor: That will always be so.

JN: I am merely pointing it out to the House. The version that we received from the Pakistan Government was different. We pursued the matter and we received their reply; we received an expression of regret from the Pakistan Government that this incident should have happened there, that they were sorry but it could not be helped, that some hooligans must have been the cause of this, etc. The matter, of course, naturally, if I may say so, is not this particular incident but the larger issue. That is the main matter technically, with all respect to you, Sir, I do not see what the Government of India can do about a particular incident that would happen suddenly in a part of Pakistan. It is a larger issue. Perhaps it could be desirable for the House to consider even that larger issue fully and it may be that at a later stage this may be done. It is not clear to me in what shape or form we can consider it now, except, of course, to give vent to our views and our resentment at the various things that have happened. If I may say so, if at a later stage it is possible, we shall arrange for a discussion on this question. It is not very easy from every point of view, from the time table of the House, the Budget and other things; it is rather difficult. It may be that the matter is so important that it is considered necessary and time will have to be found for it.

42. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Your telegram No. 1077 dated 1st March. This has crossed mine No. 21027 of same date.

I entirely agree that we should try our utmost and without reservation to promote harmony between our two countries. In order to do this it has become essential that minorities on both sides should be rid of fear and should have a full sense of security. In subsequent telegram I am suggesting declaration which both

1. New Delhi, 2 March 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

Governments should issue. As I have already suggested to you this declaration should specifically mention recovery of abducted women and non-recognition of forced conversions.

You refer to our High Commissioner's report about conditions in East Bengal. As a matter of fact our High Commissioner's reports about these conditions are very disturbing and indicate that minorities in East Bengal are panic-stricken and are anxious to migrate. As you must be aware, frequent attacks on trains carrying Hindu refugees to West Bengal are continuing. One such attack took place on the Dacca Mail on the 26th and another on the Assam Mail on the 28th.² Our information is that all passengers of the Down Dacca Mail were detained at Rajbari yesterday. We are also informed that on 27th morning the steamer bound for Goalundo from Narayanganj carrying 1500 evacuee passengers was forced by some Muslim volunteers to disembark all the evacuee passengers on a *char* named Kazirkhola in district Faridpur. This was not a halting station and the steamer left for Goalundo leaving passengers stranded but carrying part of their luggage. After some time they were attacked by local hooligans.

Number of people proceeding to Calcutta are marooned in various places in East Bengal and it is urgently necessary to make arrangements for their completing their journey under adequate protection.

2. On 28 February, some miscreants stopped the Assam Mail soon after it left Santahar (East Bengal Railway) and assaulted the passengers. Out of 25 persons including some Muslims injured, eight died later.

43. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I suggest that following declaration might be made immediately by both Governments.

Begins. The Governments of India and Pakistan consider it their duty and responsibility to give full protection and security to minority communities in their respective countries. In order to restore confidence among minority communities

1. New Delhi, 2 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

in East and West Bengal, which has been greatly shaken by recent unfortunate events, the Governments of India and Pakistan wish to announce:

(1) That they will punish all those who have been found guilty of murder, arson, loot and other heinous offences, for instance rape and abduction of women.²

(2) That they will help in every way those who have suffered by loss of life or otherwise and give adequate financial assistance to them for purposes of rehabilitation. This will include those who have temporarily evacuated to the other country.³

(3) Both the Governments will make every effort to recover any women who may have been abducted and restore them to their families.

(4) There shall be an intensive search for looted property and those in possession of it shall be asked to return it immediately. Failing such return within a stated period, those found in possession of looted property will be presumed to have participated in looting or receiving stolen property.

(5) Persons and newspapers responsible for mischievous rumours and propaganda shall be rigorously dealt with.

(6) Each Government will appoint a committee, presided over by a person of the standing of a judge of High Court, and including a representative of the minority, preferably a member of the provincial minority board, to enquire into the origin, cause and extent of the disturbances and to make recommendations with a view to preventing recrudescence of similar trouble in future.⁴

The Governments of India and Pakistan earnestly hope that as a result of the measures indicated above, which will apply to the present and future, as well as other steps which the two Governments might take, a feeling of confidence and security will grow in the minds of the minorities and normal life will be restored. Ends.

The steps indicated above are necessary preliminaries to any further action that Governments might take. The first step is to bring about some sense of security. I agree with you that large-scale migrations should be discouraged. But the right time to say that would be after we have brought about some normality. Otherwise anything in the nature of a ban on migrations might itself produce a sense of insecurity and add to panic.

2. Liaquat Ali replied on 5 March 1950: "The scope of clause (1) should be widened by omission of specific offences by way of illustration. All offences against person and property and other criminal offences whether heinous or not, should come within the clause."
3. Liaquat Ali suggested the inclusion of a declaration in clause (2) that the two Governments would make every effort to check large-scale migration.
4. Regarding clause (6), Liaquat Ali had no objection in principle to the appointment of an inquiry committee and though inclined in favour of a purely judicial body he was "still considering the matter in consultation with all concerned on this subject."

44. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have just learnt that fifteen hundred passengers coming from Barisal to Calcutta via Khulna were stopped and detained at Benapole, near the border. Apparently the plea was that they did not have income-tax relief certificates or Indian domicile certificates. They were then taken away from there to some surrounding areas.

2. I also understand that airlines from Calcutta have been informed that they cannot book any people or carry them unless these people have these income-tax relief or Indian domicile certificates.

3. I have previously drawn your attention to large numbers of people coming to Calcutta from East Bengal being detained and marooned in various places. Every time crowds of relatives go to receive them at stations and are not only disappointed but greatly excited at the non-appearance of the people they were waiting for. I would suggest to you that this is the surest way of creating panic and excitement, which might lead to untoward incidents. Our immediate object is to stop panic and fear and produce a sense of security. This cannot be done by forcible measures which only add to panic. Still less can it be done by stopping people *en route* and leaving them high and dry where they might be attacked and looted.

4. To expect these unfortunate people to carry about income-tax certificates is rather extraordinary. So far as Indian domicile certificates are concerned, I am not aware of any having been issued. It seems to me not only very unwise but rather cruel to treat people in this way. We are passing through a period of great tension which requires great tact, which have no application in the present. I would earnestly request you to arrange for the relief and transport under proper protection of all these marooned passengers in various places.

1. New Delhi, 3 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

45. Appeal to the Indian People¹

Tomorrow is a great national festival day, the Holi, a day of rejoicing and making merry, a day which emphasises brotherliness and equality. We shall celebrate that

1. Broadcast from New Delhi, 3 March 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

day all over India, as it has been celebrated in this country for ages past. I wish we could celebrate this annual festival with a lighter heart than we possess today. It is true that in some ways we have made good and slowly we are emerging from the wood. The recent Budget statement, whatever people's opinion might be about various matters mentioned in it, showed healthy signs of recovery and proved that, in spite of all the burdens we have carried and the difficulties we have to face, India's economic position is sound. The appointment of a Planning Commission is, I hope, the inauguration of an era of constructive planning and a systematic approach to the great problem of bettering the condition of our people. All these and other signs are hopeful.

But the state of affairs in East and West Bengal darkens this entire outlook and raises problems of a magnitude and intricacy which can only be solved by the united will of the nation.

Some days ago, I made a statement in Parliament about Bengal.² I endeavoured to give such facts as I possessed in a restrained manner, because in a moment of crisis above all one must be calm and collected. Nothing is more dangerous and futile than fear and panic and the actions that follow from them. That statement, I have been informed, was not given publicity in Pakistan. But nevertheless it was attacked in violent language in the press of Pakistan and in statements made by responsible leaders there. I do not know how to deal with the spate of falsehood and hysterical outbursts that fill the Pakistan press. One example of this will show the nature and extent of this false propaganda. I gave exact figure of casualties in Calcutta upto the 17th February. These included 31 deaths of which 20 were Muslims and 11 Hindus. The Pakistan press gave big headlines that 10,000 Muslims had been killed in Calcutta. There is some difference between twenty and ten thousand and that is the difference between truth and the way the Pakistan press and others are handling news in connection with the Bengal situation.

I have made every effort to get at the facts in East and West Bengal and have made a large number of proposals to this end. But most of these have not been accepted. It is true that High Commissioners and Deputy High Commissioners have been given some facilities for touring and their reports to us are helpful. But these tours in a few places can only give very limited information and, when wild rumours are afloat, it is precise and widespread information that the public requires. Normally the press fulfils this function of supplying information. But in East Bengal hundreds of press correspondents have been discredited and are unable to function. Last year the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a convention on freedom of information. That freedom of information is singularly absent in eastern Pakistan.

In my address to Parliament, I mentioned that if present methods and proposals fail, we shall have to adopt other methods. I have been criticised for hinting at

2. See *ante*, pp. 54-62.

the possibility of war. Anyone who knows me should know that I hate war and all its works and will go to the farthest limit to avoid it. But to talk complacently of peace, when there is no peace and when something worse than war is possible and people are rattling back to barbarism, is to be blind to facts. Hence I said that we must explore every avenue and every method to avoid this great catastrophe.

The lives of tens of millions of people are involved in this and human considerations, apart from others, compel us, whether we live in India or Pakistan, to strive to our utmost to find a way out. I claim no superior virtue in myself or my Government or my people. But I do claim that, however imperfectly, we have tried to follow the right path, the path of peace and the path of equality and unity among the various communities that live in this great country. The people of Pakistan are of the same stock as we are and have the same virtues and failings. But the basic difficulty of the situation is that the policy of a religious and communal State followed by the Pakistan Government inevitably produces a sense of lack of full citizenship and a continuous insecurity among those who do not belong to the majority community.³ That policy leads to hatred and violence and produces conflict. If we solve or partly solve one problem, another and a bigger one rises in its place. We are all weak mortals, wherever we may be and in whatever country we may live, subject to passions and prejudices. But it makes all the difference in the world in what direction we look and what anchor we hold on to.

These are deep problems which have to be solved and will be solved, if there is to be peace and security in this country and Pakistan. But a sudden and quick solution of this basic problem cannot come immediately, whatever course we may adopt. At the same time the present situation brooks no delay and cannot be left as it is. Therefore the only way to deal with it is to address ourselves to the basic problem and at the same time to find some present solution of the immediate problem. This solution will necessarily be only a partial one. But it may give us time and opportunity to deal with the bigger problem adequately. Any attempt to rush a solution of the bigger problem, without the fullest consideration and preparation for it can only lead to chaos and disaster.

Some people suggest an exchange of population—an exchange of tens of millions of people uprooting them from their homelands and taking them to unknown destinations. Apart from the merits of this question, its very magnitude is so colossal and fraught with such misery to an immense number of persons that it is difficult to conceive it or to give effect to it within a measurable space of

3. The declaration of Pakistan as an Islamic State in which non-Muslims were not granted political and citizenship rights equally with the Muslims made the position of Hindus insecure. Besides, the Hindus in East Bengal were refused joint electorates on the ground that they were better represented under separate electorates. A joint electorate might, given their numbers, have given them some influence on the Government, which was precisely why it had been refused. In West Pakistan, where only a few Hindus were left, they had been refused separate electorates.

time. There are other suggestions also equally difficult. How can we deal with these matters and decide the fate of millions of people in the excitement of the moment and without the fullest thought to all possible consequences? About a third of the population of East Bengal consists of Hindus and the Muslim population of West Bengal is also considerable.

I am informed that already about 55,000 Hindu refugees have come over from East Bengal to West Bengal during the past few weeks and that the stream continues, in spite of lack of facilities and dangers of present travel. I am informed further that vast numbers of Hindus in East Bengal have lost all sense of security and are eager to come over, whatever the consequences. This is the position and the problem. I am going to Calcutta in two days' time to meet friends and colleagues there of all opinions, to see the refugees who have come from East Bengal, and to discuss with all these people this difficult problem. Any decision cannot merely be a governmental decision. It has to be something which will require the cooperation of all concerned. None of us can perform miracles or function as magicians. But we can at least function as men and women of goodwill and determination, facing a great problem and making every endeavour to solve it. We owe a duty and a responsibility to all those who are suffering or are endangered today and we must discharge it to the best of our ability.

The strength of a nation consists in a capacity for restraint in crisis and united and organised effort. If this is lacking, that strength goes to pieces. The strength of a nation ultimately consists in civilised behaviour and not in retaliation on the innocent. We have to face today's problems, but we have also to lay the foundations for tomorrow and we may not do anything today which will injure that India of tomorrow. Some of us, as individuals, may fail, nor can we ever forget the ideals for which our forefathers stood and built up the great traditions which made India famous among nations.

In this spirit I appeal to my countrymen to observe the great festival of tomorrow, as well as the other days that follow, and not to darken them by any deed which harms the cause of the nations and our common humanity.

46. To K.C. Neogy¹

New Delhi
March 4, 1950

My dear Neogy,

I have your letter of today's date.² You have raised vital questions which I can hardly answer briefly. The position in India, internal and external, is exceedingly complicated as a result of all kinds of factors. A certain super-structure continues and it is based certainly on a positive support in the country. Much more so, it is based on a negative feeling that there is no alternative. The parties you talk about are themselves in a curious state of disintegration.

In such circumstances each one of us has to face difficult problems all the time and to make his choice. Throughout these three years I have constantly had to face such problems, as my responsibility was perhaps greater than anyone else's. Whether I did right or wrong, I do not know. But anyhow I did not allow myself to be overwhelmed by responsibility or crisis and I do not propose to allow that to happen in future. Many things happen which I do not approve of. But they do happen, if I may say so, in spite of me. That is to say that I attach importance to them and yet I cannot stop them. They happen because, in the balance of things, I do not think it is important enough for me to waste too much time or energy on them or make an issue of them. Other things are more important.

I can well understand your depth of feeling about Bengal.³ To some extent we all share it. It is possible that we have made many mistakes. I think we have. But the problem is a far deeper one and mistakes or no mistakes, we would have to face it. I do not think our stoppage of coal made any major difference to this problem, though it did accelerate some forces at work.

In any event here we are facing an extraordinarily difficult situation and the next few months are going to be heavy with crises and anxiety. We just have to face them and I certainly do not propose to try to escape my responsibility. These crises are inherent in our relations with Pakistan.

I appreciate your desire to go to Bengal.⁴ But I do not see what you can do there. When you say Bengal, it is not clear whether you mean East Bengal or West

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Neogy was disappointed with the people who were controlling the party machine and protested against the admission of any unscrupulous person into the administration. He said that one member of the Congress Party had been telling people that he would be fitted into the Ministry of Commerce. Neogy felt humiliated at this.

3. He also regarded himself partially responsible for the untoward developments in East Bengal. He referred to the decision to stop coal supply to Pakistan and his warning "as to what policy we would follow in case Pakistan started oppressing Hindus as a retaliation..."

4. Neogy felt it more appropriate to proceed to Bengal in an unofficial capacity and serve the afflicted people.

Bengal. You cannot go to East Bengal easily, as I have not been allowed to go there. As you know, I am going to Calcutta day after tomorrow. On my return we shall discuss the situation further. I should like you to keep in touch with me and see me fairly often. I do not want you to carry your mental burden yourself, when I am there to share it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

47. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I would like to draw your attention to the following report regarding abductions in Barisal:

On the 13th February several Hindu families who had assembled in the Lakutia Zemindar's house were mercilessly beaten. Six young ladies who were hiding in Lakutia house were forcibly taken out by goondas who also set fire to adjoining thatched house while leaving the place uninterrupted. The steamer services between Barisal and Khulna were suspended on 14th and 15th February and the Hindus who were eager to send back their female members could not do that for want of conveyance. As a result a few families from the suburbs who came to avail the steamer were sheltered by Muslims in their boats and subsequently kidnapped from there.

According to the information received from the affected places the total number of deaths exceeded 125 whereas about 100 young girls are reported to be still untraced. Several Hindus who are willing to leave the district are not allowed by the district authorities to do so. Only a few Hindu families could avail of the only steamer which left Barisal on the 16th February. *Ends.*

Our Deputy High Commissioner in a report dated the 28th February states that reports have been received by him that abduction of women took place on a considerable scale in some villages in Sodar sub-division of district Bakerganj and that a large number of refugees who have collected at Nalchhiti and Jhalakati in the same Sub-Division are suffering from want of rations.

1. New Delhi, 4 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

I would request that these reports be investigated earliest possible and vigorous measures taken for the recovery of the women and their restoration to their relations. I also suggest that where refugees are collected and suffering without food, steps should be taken to provide them with free rations.

48. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have received a report that the Government of East Bengal have threatened to close down all refugee camps in Dacca except one at Sadhana Oushadhalaya and another at Ram Krishna Mission and have warned that no Government rations will be supplied to any other camps from March 3rd. One camp at Nawabganj to which Government have threatened to stop supply of rations contains more than 1000 refugees who are afraid of going back either to their houses which have been completely looted or to other camps which are far away.

I am sure you will agree that it would be cruel to stop the supply of rations and starve the refugees till normal conditions return and the refugees feel safe enough to go to their homes many of which are at present occupied by trespassers. I would therefore request that the camps at Dacca and elsewhere may be kept open and the refugees therein continue to be supplied with rations.

1. 4 March 1950. File No. 1(10)-BL/50, M.E.A.

49. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Your telegram No. 1113 of March 3rd.² The information available to us shows that your account of the disturbances in Calcutta is grossly exaggerated. I am, however, referring it to the Chief Minister of West Bengal for his comments.

1. 4 March 1950. File No. 1(10)-BL/50, M.E.A.
2. Liaquat Ali Khan alleged that on 26 February two Muslim passengers were killed at Sealdah station, on 27 February 18 were killed in mob violence and that Muslims continued to suffer in incidents of bomb throwing and arson in Calcutta.

50. To Sri Prakasa¹

New Delhi
March 5, 1950

My dear Prakasa,²

. . . We are up against a pretty stiff problem in Bengal and for the moment I see no easy way out, or for the matter of that, a difficult way. Naturally something has to be done and will be done.³ It is just at moments like this that one misses Gandhiji tremendously.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection. Extract.
2. Governor of Assam at this time.
3. The intention to resign was still serious in Nehru's mind.

51. To Lord Mountbatten¹

New Delhi
March 5, 1950

My dear Dickie,

Edwina gave me your letter of the 19th February. She was here for just five days and then left for Bombay and Ceylon. It was delightful having her here. Five days were not enough for her even to meet her innumerable friends in Delhi.

I understand that the question of amalgamation of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides had again been taken in hand because of your letter. I shall keep in touch with this matter and I hope it will go through.

We are having a very difficult time just now and I am going to Calcutta early tomorrow morning. East and West Bengal are at each other's throats. Somehow we cannot put an end to all the terrible consequences of partition. Kashmir has gone on for two and a half years. But Kashmir today has become almost of secondary importance because of the Bengal situation. Practically every Hindu in East Bengal is clamouring for evacuation, because he says that it is impossible to live there with any security. There are 12 million Hindus in East Bengal and so you can understand the nature of the problem. To a lesser extent, a considerable number of Muslims in West Bengal are equally apprehensive and there is a drift towards

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

East Bengal. During the last three weeks or so about 60,000 Hindus have come from East Bengal to West and about 15 to 20,000 Muslims have gone from West Bengal and Assam to East Bengal. The state of feeling in Calcutta now is approaching high fever and all kinds of anti-social elements have joined in. On the whole the situation in West Bengal has been kept in check by strong governmental handling. In East Bengal it went to pieces for some days and there was a very considerable killing, running into several thousands, apart from arson, loot and abduction.

So here we are facing this nice little problem and I am going to Calcutta tomorrow. Various groups and sweetly reasonable people have announced a *hartal* to welcome me, or rather to tell me how fed up they are with my inactivity and peaceful behaviour.

There is widespread resentment and strong feeling at the comments of the British press which seemed to cast the blame for almost everything on India.² It is a bad lookout. I suppose we shall go through this, as we have gone through other troubles. One looks forward to a time when the problems one faces are of a different and quieter nature.

When will we have such a time with the atom bomb and the hydrogen bomb dominating the scene?...

Yours,
Jawaharlal

2. The British press had commented that fresh riots in West Bengal had forced mass Muslim migration into East Bengal, that military dispositions were being taken and irresponsible press elements were calling for "action" by India and that using the excuse of February's anti-Hindu riots in East Bengal, the Indian press had begun a campaign for police action by India in East Pakistan.

52. To Syama Prasad Mookerjee¹

New Delhi
March 5, 1950

My dear Syama Prasad,

Your letter of today's date. First of all there is no intention of our issuing the joint declaration before I return from Calcutta. Secondly, this joint declaration, we know well enough, by itself is not adequate and something else has to be done. We are

1. J.N. Collection.

giving a good deal of thought to these other steps, and in fact we propose to take some other steps. I shall consult people in Calcutta and on my return we can decide.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

53. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have received three telegrams from you here in Calcutta forwarded from Delhi Nos. 1141² and 1144³ dated 5th March and 1145⁴ dated 6th March. I am answering some points raised in them separately. I shall send a fuller reply from Delhi where I return tomorrow. Meanwhile, I should like to draw your attention specially to certain matters.

3. Regarding proposed declaration I think it is important that we should mention in declaration that forced conversions cannot be recognised. This is common ground. There is a great deal of feeling on this subject and many cases have been brought to my notice.

4. Regarding migrations, I should very much like to discourage large scale transfers of population. Migrations cannot however be prevented until a feeling of full security grows amongst minorities. That feeling is singularly absent at the present moment and idea that migration is prevented and travelling is dangerous actually increases panic, lessens feeling of security and produces feeling of being trapped in a dangerous place. The only way to produce a sense of security and desire not to migrate is to give freedom to do so for those who are so inclined. In addition, full arrangements for protection during journey must always be provided. If both these are done, a number of people will no doubt migrate, but very soon this freedom of movement will help in producing a sense of security

1. Calcutta, 8 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had written about communal disturbances in Calcutta and conditions of refugees in Calcutta and Assam.
3. Liaquat Ali had suggested certain amendments in the draft declaration.
4. Liaquat Ali had written about the reports of disturbances in Jalpaiguri and Burdwan and refugees pouring into East Bengal. He mentioned troop concentrations and a whispering campaign originating from Calcutta that India would soon invade East Bengal and thought it to be the direct result of Nehru's statement in Parliament. He also referred to Nehru's broadcast and his remarks about minorities in Pakistan. See *ante*, pp. 54-62 and 84-87.

and the desire to migrate will greatly lessen. Hence I suggest that we should clearly state in the proposed declaration or separately that while we have no desire to encourage large-scale migration, we wish to provide facilities and full protection for travelling from one country to another.

5. I have already brought to your notice cases of attacks on trains and forcible disembarkation of passengers from trains and steamers.⁵ I am told that some of these attacks took place despite the presence of armed guards. Even now train services have not been fully restored and travel by train and steamer in East Pakistan seems very insecure. If you have any difficulties in providing full protection to trains and steamers, some arrangement, similar to what existed for some time in the Punjab, might be arrived at for a relatively brief period of a few weeks. This would mean permission to either country to arrange for protection during travelling from certain specified railway and river stations in the other country. Some such arrangement for a brief period would immediately produce a sense of confidence which will lead to a feeling of security.

6. Demand for production of certificates of domicile and exemption from income tax⁶ is proving very harassing to those who wish to come away from East Bengal. I have already drawn your attention to this. In existing circumstances it has little meaning and I trust that for some weeks at least it will not be followed.

7. I should like to inform you that my investigation here from a large variety of sources has led me to the conclusion that conditions in some parts of East Bengal have been even worse than I had imagined. Attacks on railway trains and steamers and taking of passengers out have led to great excitement here. I am convinced that mere declaration of good intentions for the future will not meet the situation. One immediate step which should follow is to make it easy for those people who wish to come to do so. I might mention that there are a considerable number of persons in East Pakistan who in terms of our Constitution are or may become Indian nationals. For the present of course no clear demarcation has taken place and no certificates of citizenship have been issued by us and no register of citizens has been prepared. It is not my intention to enter upon a legal discussion of citizenship. In any view of the matter it seems to me desirable that there should be freedom of movement with protection and I hope you will give serious and immediate consideration to my proposal.

5. Liaquat Ali had written that "when trains from Pakistan reach Indian border, Hindu youths enter compartments and assault Muslim passengers. They are also seen to throw bangles and torn blouses on floors of compartments to make it look as if the train had been attacked. When the trains reach stations in West Bengal Hindu youths start shouting that Hindu passengers have been murdered."
6. The Pakistan authorities were now insisting that evacuees should obtain, in advance, income tax clearance certificates and should also be in possession of Indian domicile certificates if they wished to migrate to India.

54. To Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri¹

New Delhi
March 9, 1950

My dear Rohini Kumarji,

I have just come back from Calcutta, where for nearly four days I carried out intensive consultations with all kinds of people, including some people who had come from Assam, Cachar, etc. The situation is an extraordinarily difficult and delicate one, requiring every care in utterance. As you know, there has been some kind of a mass uprising against Muslims in Goalpara and a very large number of them have been driven into East Bengal. Among those driven are old residents of Assam, not newcomers. The Chief Minister of Assam gave me a graphic account of this and he was greatly distressed. This kind of thing greatly weakens our position and our case against East Bengal and Pakistan.

Perhaps you know that the Prime Minister of Pakistan has sent me a protest against what you are reported to have said in Parliament on March 7th, openly advocating immediate war against Pakistan.² Whatever our policy may be in future, such a statement in Parliament by a responsible member like you, is exceedingly embarrassing and tends to put us in the wrong. It gives a handle to Pakistan to build up their case, which is that we are bent on war and on breaking up Pakistan. The foreign press takes advantage of this and thus the burden is cast upon us.

I quite realise your deep feelings and I largely share them. But I hope you will appreciate that great harm can be done by statements of this kind.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Rohini Kumar Chaudhury had said: "I would seriously suggest that war should be declared so that the position of our Muslim friends in India may be safeguarded."

55. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have seen your telegram 1198 of 8th March just now after my return from Calcutta. Mr Rohini Kumar Chaudhury's utterance is an extreme example of the sentiments engendered by the unfortunate happenings in East Bengal. I agree, however, that speeches of this kind made from either side are most unfortunate and may do incalculable harm to relations between our two countries.

1. New Delhi, 9 March 1950. File No. 27(92)/50-PMS.

56. Assurance of Protection to those in Danger¹

During the three days I have been in Calcutta, I have met innumerable people of all shades and opinions. I have sought to find out facts from them and I discussed the suggestion they made to me. I have visited the border area near Bongaon and seen many of the new refugees from East Bengal. I have also visited some of the camps of the Muslims in Park Circus in Calcutta.

The gravity and urgency of the situation have impressed themselves upon me. Because of this, it is clear that it is essential to give protection immediately to those who stand in need of it. It is also clear to me that every step taken must be carefully considered keeping all its possible consequences in view, so that no evil results may follow from it to the disadvantage of our people and our country. I have carried a heavy load of anxiety and responsibility and because of this I have shared my thoughts with the many friends who came to see me. That responsibility has, to some extent, to be shared by all if we are to function effectively and with dignity. The problem of Bengal, as I said some time ago, has first priority today in India and it occupies my mind to the exclusion of much else. I am going from Calcutta today for urgent work in Delhi. But I hope to return here within a week and I feel that I can understand it and deal with it more effectively when I am near the people of Bengal, who have been the chief sufferers.

This problem has its immediate aspect and a longer aspect. I shall not discuss this longer aspect at this stage, although it fills my mind and we have to find a remedy for it.

The immediate aspect means giving protection to those who are in danger and of making arrangements for those who so wish to travel to safety under adequate protection. We are tackling both these immediately.

The many stories I have heard and read of what has occurred in East Bengal have filled me with grief and whatever the political aspect of it may be, none of us can shake off his responsibility or his strong feeling for those who are in peril and seek safety and deliverance. I have grieved also for those who have suffered for no fault of their own in any part of India. Every citizen of India, wherever he may be, in India or Pakistan, and whatever his religion might be, is a special responsibility of ours. But there are other responsibilities also to our kith and kin and we are thoroughly alive to them and are taking steps accordingly. Minorities must be given full protection, and where this is lacking, they should be given opportunity to seek safety and protection elsewhere. It is our duty to see that this is done. Let us perform our duty in regard to our minorities entrusted to us and

1. Message on leaving Calcutta for Delhi, 9 March 1950. *National Herald*, 10 March 1950.

then let us insist that others do likewise. We must give full protection to our minority groups. Both self-respect and national honour demand it.

Many workers in factories are not at present working there owing to fear. The sooner they go back to their work, the better for them as well as for the community and the nation.

The work of looking after the refugees who come here from East Bengal requires careful effort and coordination. I am glad that steps have been taken to this end.

It has given satisfaction to me, in this hour of our difficulty and crisis, that all kinds of people, belonging to different schools of thoughts, have expressed their desire to sink their differences and to face this crisis together.² I welcome this and I hope that this will result in far-reaching good for Bengal and India. We have to direct this feeling and urge to action into right channels of constructive effort.

Above all, let each one of us remember that we have the honour and future of our great country in his or her keeping, and let no evil or thoughtless deed tarnish that honour. I am deeply grateful for the confidence which so many people have shown me here and for the affection which they have showered upon me.

2. For example, fifty leading Muslims of Calcutta in a statement condemned "the hideous and gruesome atrocities" in East Bengal and appealed to the Government of India to take "drastic and effective steps" to make recurrence of such incidents impossible.

57. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi
March 10, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I came back last night from Calcutta rather exhausted. The exhaustion was not physical, as I had not rushed about. It was a mental and emotional exhaustion, having had to deal for four long days with hysterical people in a highly surcharged atmosphere. I pleaded with them, argued, reasoned and occasionally shouted at them. I am not quite clear in my mind what the result of my visit was, except that for the moment I produced some impression. How long will that impression last, I do not know. And so, not knowing what else to do, I have decided to go back to Calcutta on the 14th for another two or three days.

The situation is bad and progressively tends to grow worse. Evil forces have been set in motion and they go forward with their own momentum. I have no doubt that reasonable people can easily stop this drift, but reasonable people are few and,

1. J.N. Collection.

in any event, cannot influence much the much larger number of unreasonable people. The worst of it is that there is a growing feeling that there is no other escape but war. This kind of fatalism is dangerous. Gradually, however, the possible consequences of war are being realised. I do not give up hope, though that hope sometimes grows dim.

In my mind I still think of what I wrote to you sometime ago. I realise all the difficulties, but at the same time there is just the possibility of my functioning on a new plane making all the difference to this situation. It is a gamble worth taking.

I suppose you met Edwina on her way to Colombo. She will be passing through India again round about the 23rd of this month and spending four or five days here. I wish you could come also about that time to cheer us all up.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

58. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi
March 10, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,

I returned from Calcutta last night after four days stay there. These four days were very exhausting, not physically so, for I am used to physical exertion. They were exhausting for other reasons. As more and more facts came to my knowledge and the effect that those facts and occurrences had produced on people's minds, I was greatly depressed.

It is not much good from any long-term point of view for us to go on accusing each other or other people. The burden of grappling with this difficult problem, which grows more difficult and complicated, is upon us. The consequences of not solving it are terrible to contemplate for both our countries.

I have sent you from here today two telegrams. I enclose copies of them. I earnestly hope that the declaration that I suggest, and to which you have largely agreed, will be issued by both our Governments very soon. Everyday's delay may make some difference.

One fact has impressed itself upon me and that is the widespread fear among the Hindus in East Bengal and their conviction that they have no part or lot in Pakistan, no self-respect or security. Hence their desire to get away. Whether facts justify this conviction of theirs or not, may be arguable. But their feeling this way

1. J.N. Collection.

is itself a fact to be reckoned with. It is because of this that I have become convinced, against my will, that full facilities for them to come away, under adequate protection, to West Bengal should be provided. I do not wish in the slightest to encourage a mass migration. I have fought against this for a long time past and I still believe that this would be bad for the people concerned as well as for India and Pakistan. But, in the circumstances, to talk too much about their remaining where they are and preventing them from coming away, is to irritate and frighten them all the more and to increase their panicky condition. Therefore, the situation has to be tackled in another way and that is to permit them to come, if they so want to and make them feel that they can go under sufficient protection. This declaration and feeling will itself improve the conditions and lessen the state of panic. No doubt a considerable number will come away. But I feel sure that the exodus will lessen and almost stop fairly soon. The mere knowledge that one can come away removes the sense of fear and takes away from the urgency of the desire to come. If conditions improve, as we hope they will, then the exodus will stop, and it may be, that those who had come over would think of going back. This applies to both countries. I hope, therefore, that you will agree to this. I would also like you to agree to the other proposal about exchange of guards that I have made.

I am glad that your Government has ordered that no certificates, either of income tax or domicile, should be demanded from these people, who are travelling from one country to another in these circumstances. I am grateful to you for this.

The more I think of it, the more I feel that these arrangements and declarations that we may make, good as they may be, are not enough to grapple with this situation. Some kind of a psychological approach affecting people's minds has to be made. If Gandhiji was here, he would undoubtedly have known what to do in the circumstances. Unfortunately we have not got him with us. Nevertheless, we have to do something to stop this rot.

I had suggested to you that you and I should visit East and West Bengal. I had done so with no political motive and with no desire to make some kind of capital out of this tour. My sole object was to help in soothing people and in bringing back some normality. You did not agree to this proposal for the reasons you gave and thought that it would not do any good. I still think that a joint tour of ours would produce a very great impression both in East and West Bengal.

I am so anxious to do something in my individual capacity that I have been thinking repeatedly of visiting some of these places, not as Prime Minister but as a private individual. It is just possible that my visit might shake people up. I attach so much importance to this that I would gladly give up my Prime Ministership and go to East and West Bengal entirely as a private citizen and stay for a while there. I would not do so with the object of carrying on an enquiry and of casting blame, but just to give some heart and confidence to the people I meet, whether Hindus or Muslims. I think I have some capacity to do so. I wish you would agree

to my doing so, that is my going to Pakistan as a private individual for a stay of a few weeks.

When I was in Calcutta, I had a message from Basanti Devi² (Mrs C.R. Das) saying that she would like to go to Dacca, if her visit could do any good. She is an old lady and not too well in health, but she was anxious to be of some service in soothing ruffled feelings. Perhaps you know that her family originally came from Dacca. Her suggestion was that she might go there with her daughter (Mrs Aparna Ray³) and one or two companions and stay quietly in Dacca for a while, hoping that her presence itself and meeting a few old friends might be helpful. I sent word to her that I rather liked the idea of her going, but if she did so, it should be entirely in a private capacity and with no official interference on our part. I refrained therefore from bringing this matter rather officially before you. But as I am writing to you, I am mentioning it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. (1880-1974); arrested during non-cooperation movement, 1921; President, Bengal P.C.C., 1922.
3. (1898-1973); social worker and member, A.I.C.C., 1919-30.

59. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

During my four-day stay in Calcutta, I was inundated with evidence from reliable sources of events in East Bengal during the past month or more. I have been powerfully impressed as well as distressed by this evidence. I am not passing all this on to you, but the basic fact came out repeatedly that non-Muslims in East Bengal live in a state of continuous fear and apprehension and all sense of security has gone. More particularly, they feel that officials, who are very largely of one community, do no function impartially. In this connection I should like to remind you of the fact that the Dacca trouble started on February 10th by a procession and a meeting of Secretariat employees. Fiery speeches were delivered and immediately after, arson, looting and killing commenced. It is significant that Government servants should have taken the lead and organised this.

1. New Delhi, 10 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

60. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Reference your telegrams 1141 of 5th March, 1145 of 6th March and 1185 of 7th March. I am giving some factual information below. Other matters being dealt with separately.

2. Your information that disturbances continue in Calcutta is not correct. Except for a few stray incidents there has been no disturbance worth mentioning in Calcutta since 12th February. Such incidents in a big city like Calcutta are not uncommon even in normal times. There was great excitement in Calcutta when reports reached the city of recent attacks on trains and steamers in East Bengal and removal of large number of passengers at wayside stations. Authorities however took effective steps immediately.

3. I am surprised to read about allegation in your telegram that Hindu young men enter railway compartments on frontier and assault Muslim passengers. The story of bangles and torn blouses being thrown about in compartments is fantastic. There is plenty of evidence about attacks on these trains in Pakistan and we would welcome a full enquiry into the matter. Indeed East Bengal Government have themselves admitted these attacks on trains near Rajbari and Santahar, although they have sought to make out that these have no communal complexion.

4. No serious disturbance has taken place in Howrah since 15th February. Some days ago there was some disturbance in mill areas in Hooghly district including Chinsurah. Casualties were: dead three Hindus, twelve Muslims and nineteen unidentified and injured twelve Hindus and twenty-eight Muslims. Incidents at Telinipara and Chandernagore partly due to labour communist trouble. No further incidents in Hooghly district since 4th March. Number of refugees in Hooghly Imambara is 1200, near Victoria Jute Mills about 5000. Shelter, food, sanitary arrangements and light provided for them. Four women, and no children attacked. No villages damaged by loot or arson.

5. No incident occurred in Burdwan in March and none in Murshidabad in February or March.

6. Jalpaiguri. There was some disturbance but the account supplied to you is very great exaggeration of what occurred. In all 35 small Muslim huts were burnt and 20 small shops looted. Loss of property estimated in thousands of rupees and not in crores. Top wall of a mosque slightly damaged by fire from neighbouring house. Number of dead in Jalpaiguri town 16 Muslims, one Hindu. Most stringent measures were taken by the district officer. Refugees being looked after.

7. Your information about condition of Muslim refugees in Calcutta is unfounded. I have visited their main camp in Park Circus. Adequate relief is given

1. New Delhi, 10 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

to them consisting of free ration according to normal scale together with four annas in cash to each refugee. In addition, milk supplied free to children. Blankets distributed to those in need. It is hoped that most of these refugees will return soon to their homes.

8. Goalpara district in Assam. Trouble consisting chiefly of arson occurred there resulting in considerable number of refugees going chiefly to Cooch Behar and East Bengal.² I have discussed situation with Chief Minister, Assam and his Government had taken very strict measures including firing by police and military, and a large number of arrests were made. Understand that large number of non-Muslim refugees have crossed into Assam from Rangpur district.

9. I have not seen reports except in newspapers about happenings in certain U.P. towns. All these apparently occurred in connection with Holi festival. I have called for full reports from the State Government.

10. I am deeply grieved at any such occurrences in any part of India regardless of what happens elsewhere, and have expressed myself strongly about them. But you will appreciate that accounts of occurrences in East Bengal have deeply stirred feelings all over India. I shall deal separately with your reference to my broadcast and some other matters.

2. The riots in Goalpara were not so much anti-Muslim as anti-the-men-of-the plains who had driven the Santhals into the hills over the years. The Santhals were particularly angry with the Muslims, because a number of Muslims had settled in Goalpara in the years immediately before partition. The then Government of Assam had encouraged this settlement. The Santhals had been pushed farther back into the hills by the new immigrants. For a week they had rioted unimpeded because that part of Goalpara was so remote that hardly anybody knew about it.

61. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have already dealt with various matters contained in your telegrams of March 5th and 6th.

2. There has been no troop concentration on our part on East Bengal border.² Some normal pickets and patrols are functioning on that border. We are informed

1. Now Delhi, 10 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had written on 6 March 1950, "Reports have also been coming for some time of troop carrier concentrations on borders of East Bengal. A whispering campaign originating from Calcutta is afoot that India would soon invade East Bengal and that the Hindus should clear out of that place before invasion comes."

however that on Pakistan side of border, Ansars and others are being collected and there are reports of their infiltration on Indian side at some points. You will appreciate that any infiltration or occupation of Indian territory cannot be tolerated by us. More particularly, in existing circumstances, this is likely to lead to dangerous consequences.

3. You refer to my broadcast. I might inform you that we have repeatedly condemned killing, arson and looting committed anywhere in India and have taken stringent steps to punish evil-doers.

4. It is true that I did not state in my broadcast that under no circumstances would war not take place. I stated that I would do my utmost to avoid war. It would have been unrealistic in the circumstances for me to say more because conflict does not depend on one party alone and we have seen things happening which may be said to be worse than war. For several months past the Pakistan press has openly talked about war. Many statements have also been made by prominent people in Pakistan advocating war in regard to Kashmir. It is for us to remove these dangerous trends and in particular to give sense of security to minorities.

5. I am sorry if you feel that I have not correctly represented character of Pakistan State. After a close study of that State and of statements of its leaders and, more particularly, of the atmosphere that prevails in that State, I have been convinced that non-Muslims cannot have that equality of citizenship and of functioning which modern democratic states lay down and practise. There can be little doubt that in fact this is the belief of minorities in Pakistan. Many people who had firmly decided to stay in Pakistan and give their full cooperation and allegiance to it feel now that their position is intolerable. That fact alone is significant. The theory of a religious state inevitably leads to the conclusion that persons belonging to another religion have an inferior status and do not have normal opportunities in practice. This has become evident.

62. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

In my telegram No. 30592, dated 2nd March, I informed you that we were asking our Minister in Berne to approach International Red Cross to send out representatives and requested you to telegraph also. We have been informed that Dr Rueggar, President of Organisation, proposes to send Dr Vischer of Basle with one assistant

1. New Delhi, 10 March 1950. File No. 1(10)-BL/50, M.E.A.

but is awaiting your concurrence. I hope that you will telegraph this urgently if you have not done so already.

63. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

In my telegram No. 22127 dated 9th March from Calcutta, I suggested some changes in the proposed declaration.² In my immediately following telegram I give the text of the declaration which, in our opinion, we should now make without delay. By way of explanation I make the following comments:

A. I have explained to you previously why I consider it necessary for facilities and full protection for travelling from one country to the other should be provided now as a measure designed to create confidence and allay panic. I would, therefore, strongly urge you to agree to the insertion in the declaration of 3 as proposed. I have also suggested to you separately arrangements for a limited period of a few weeks, such as were made in the Punjab in 1947 for armed guards to be provided at certain specified railway and river stations, by the other country, to accompany trains and steamers for protection.³ I have not included this in the declaration, as it would be out of place there. Nevertheless, immediate introduction of this arrangement is important and it might be provided for by an exchange of letters or telegrams.

B. 5 of the draft declaration is of vital importance and should be included. From the many talks that I have made in Calcutta, I have discovered that not only have cases of forcible conversion occurred, but that there is very strong feeling that it should be authoritatively declared that forcible conversion will not be recognised.

1. New Delhi, 10 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali replied on 10 March 1950 that Nehru's suggestions contained in the above-mentioned telegram with regard to additions to draft declarations were under consideration and he would reply soon in detail (see the next item). Referring to paragraph 5 of Nehru's telegram regarding insecure travelling conditions in East Bengal, he wrote that this was wholly incorrect. There had been no incidents for several days in East Bengal except two attacks on trains.
3. Liaquat Ali thought that this proposal had grave implications and its mere mention might create a most unfortunate situation throughout the country. He felt that any public mention of this might lead to the gravest consequences and should be avoided.

C. 8. From the standpoint of the public effect of the declaration, it is important that the judicial character of the presiding officer of the proposed committees and the inclusion in it of representatives of minorities should be explicitly mentioned. Failing that, confidence in the findings of the proposed committees will not be assured.

I have given considerable thought to the question of some provisions, which would act as an effective deterrent to communal violence and crime. You will remember that, in cases of widespread communal disturbance in the past, it was usual to impose collective fines. I feel strongly that resort to that procedure will be extremely helpful in present situation and hope that you will agree. To produce maximum effect, it would be desirable to mention this specifically in the declaration. However, if you are not agreeable to such inclusion, I should be content if we were to agree between ourselves that this would be done.

In view of the urgency of this matter, I shall be grateful to have an early reply.

64. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Reference my immediately preceding telegram. Following is proposed text of declaration.

Begins. The Governments of India and Pakistan consider it their duty and responsibility to give full protection and security to minority communities in their respective countries and are determined to take all necessary measures to that end. In order to restore confidence among minority communities in both countries and more especially, in East Pakistan, West Bengal, and Assam, which has been greatly shaken by recent unfortunate events, which the two Governments strongly condemn, the Governments of India and Pakistan wish to announce:

1. That they will punish all those who have been found guilty of offences against person and property and other criminal offences.
2. That they will help in every way those who have suffered by loss of life or otherwise and give adequate financial assistance to them for purposes of

1. New Delhi, 10 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

rehabilitation. This will include those who have temporarily evacuated to the other country, provided they return to their own country, for which full facilities will be provided.

3. That, while the two Governments have no desire to encourage large-scale migrations, they will provide facilities and full protection for travelling from one country to the other to those who may wish to do so.²

4. That both Governments will make every effort to recover any women who have been abducted and restore them to their families.

5. That forcible conversions will not be recognised.³

6. That there will be an intensive search for looted property and those in possession of it shall be asked to return it immediately. Failing such return within a stated period, those found in possession of looted property will be presumed to have participated in looting or receiving stolen property and will be dealt with accordingly.

7. That persons and newspapers responsible for mischievous rumours and propaganda shall be rigorously dealt with.

8. That each Government will appoint a committee, presided over by a person of the standing of a High Court Judge and including representatives of the minorities, to enquire into the origin, cause and extent of the disturbances, and to make recommendations with a view to preventing recrudescence of similar troubles in future.⁴

9. The Governments of India and Pakistan earnestly hope that as a result of the measures indicated above, which will apply to the present and the future, as well as other steps which the two Governments might take, a feeling of confidence and security will grow in the minds of the minority and normal life will be fully restored.⁵

2. Liaquat Ali replied on 13 March that clause 3 should be redrafted thus: "the two Governments will make all reasonable efforts to discourage large-scale migrations but will provide facilities and full protection for travelling from one country to other for those who may wish to do so." He wrote that he attached importance to this matter.
3. Liaquat Ali suggested that clause 5 might be amended to read: "that forcible conversions if any will not be recognised."
4. Liaquat Ali still considered that the committee should consist of persons of the standing of a High Court Judge and accepted Nehru's suggestion to include a member of the minority community. Clause 8 would now read: "that each Government will appoint a committee presided over by a person of the standing of the High Court Judge and including a representative of minorities to enquire into the origin, cause and extent of disturbances and to make recommendations with a view to preventing recrudescence of similar troubles in future."
5. Liaquat Ali had written that the remainder of the revised declaration was in accord with his views. If Nehru agreed to these amendments, "I suggest that declaration should be released to press on morning of March 16th from Delhi and Karachi."

65. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Your telegram No.1239, dated 10th March has crossed mine Nos.22129 and 22130 of same date. I have in earlier telegrams given you full reasons for suggestions I have made. I trust that the declaration suggested by me will be acceptable to you so that we can jointly issue it at an early date.

Every report of communal trouble that you have sent to me has been and is being promptly attended to and State Governments concerned issue official reports of true facts with necessary promptitude and frequency.² I devote personal attention to this matter constantly and I am satisfied that our civil and armed forces, both Central and Provincial, are doing everything possible to protect minorities. In the circumstances, I can only express my profound regret that you should give credence to reports that whatever can be done is not being done. It was because I felt that mistrust could best be avoided by joint survey of facts that I had suggested appointment of commissions including Ministers and the joint visit by both of us to the affected areas.

1. New Delhi, 11 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had written that the gravest communal conditions were prevalent mostly in Assam, West Bengal and the Central Provinces. "The situation in India demands far more effective and energetic action by your civil and armed forces than has hitherto been taken for protection of minority community."

66. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi
March 11, 1950

My dear Rajendra Babu,

As you know, the situation as between India and Pakistan is very tense and somehow we are being driven by circumstances to extreme courses. The more I think of it, the more I am distressed at the succession of events. We seem to be caught in a terrible circle of evil, from which it is difficult to extract oneself. In any event, the next few weeks are likely to be very difficult ones requiring vital decisions. Indeed the period is likely to last a little longer.

1. J.N. Collection.

In view of these circumstances, I hope you will not be away from Delhi during these critical days and weeks for long at any period. Apart from the satisfaction of having you here and taking your advice, your presence may be needed for some step to be taken.

There is also another aspect, which is important. We have too long delayed the formation of a new Council of Ministers, which should have been done in accordance with the new Constitution. Having postponed this again and again, we thought that the right time would be after the Budget is passed. It should be done anyhow before Parliament adjourns. This means that it should be done some time in the first half of April, preferably in the earlier part. This also will need your presence in Delhi.

I mention this so that your plans might be made accordingly and the need of upsetting them later might not arise.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

67. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
March 11, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

... You will notice that Liaquat Ali Khan vehemently opposes any idea about our going to the other side or *vice versa*. It is clear that he would not agree to it. We need not give up this matter, but for the present, I think, we should concentrate on the declaration.

I wrote a personal letter to Liaquat Ali Khan yesterday in which I dealt with these matters. In the course of the letter I mentioned that I had been approached by Basanti Devi and that she had expressed a desire to go to Dacca. I added that while I welcome this idea I did not want to make this visit an official one, and did not, therefore, wish to take any official step.

I feel it would be a good thing if Basanti Devi and her daughter, accompanied by one or two persons (not P.R. Das²) went to Dacca for some time just quietly

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. (1881-1963); younger brother of C.R. Das; judge of Patna High Court for some time; President of All India Civil Liberties Union.

to stay there without any fuss. I do not know what steps you are taking about it. Probably Mridula, who was to have gone to Dacca, might have mentioned this to Nurul Amin³ informally.

I hope to be with you on the 14th forenoon.

Yours,
Jawahar

3. (1897-1974); Pakistani politician; member, Bengal Legislative Council, 1942, Muslim League member of Bengal Legislative Assembly, 1946; Speaker, Bengal Assembly, 1946-47; member, Pakistan Constituent Assembly; Minister for Civil Supplies, East Pakistan Government, 1947-48; Chief Minister, East Pakistan, September 1948-March 1954; Vice-President of Pakistan, 1972-73.

68. To Aruna Asaf Ali¹

New Delhi
March 12, 1950

My dear Aruna,

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd March. I do not quite understand why it should require a letter from me to Krishna for him to help you to go to Russia. Anyhow I have written to him about this.

We are having a very bad time in Bengal, both East and West. The actual major incidents are over. But the situation is tense and explosive. An evil fate seems to pursue us, reducing many of us to the level of brutes.²

I am going to Calcutta again in a day or two.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Because of his efforts to deal with the growing frenzy, Nehru was the recipient of a large number of abusive letters and even threats of assassination.

69. Telegram to Gopinath Bardoloi¹

I am much concerned about happenings in Goalpara and Barpeta. You will appreciate that this large-scale destruction and looting and driving away of thousands

1. 13 March 1950. File No. 3(15)-BL/50, M.E.A.

of Muslims injures our reputation and creates many complications. I trust that you are doing everything in your Government's power to help the sufferers and to punish the evil-doers. Please send particulars about deaths, other casualties, damage done and people driven away.

2. I should have liked to visit Goalpara myself but I cannot do so for some time. I am requesting your Governor to pay a visit to Barpeta and Goalpara before he comes for Governors' Conference.²

2. Gopinath Bardoloi in his reply of 15 March confirmed that in Goalpara and Barpeta in the latter part of February 1950 there was lawlessness which was instigated by Bengali refugees and communists. The army had been called in and civil officers permitted to impose Section 144 and use available forces to protect Muslim villages.

70. To N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar¹

New Delhi
March 13, 1950

My dear Gopalaswami,

I have just seen the Army Intelligence report regarding Calcutta dated 13th March. This gives rather unusual figures about people leaving and coming to Calcutta. It says that on the 11th March 3700 Hindus arrived in Calcutta by rail from East Pakistan and on the same day 7000 Muslims left Calcutta by rail for East Pakistan. On the 12th March 1000 Hindus arrived in Calcutta from East Pakistan by the Barisal Express. On the same day 1860 Muslims left Calcutta for East Pakistan by the Assam Mail, Barisal Express, and the Chittagong Express. Thus during these two days, 4700 Hindus came from East Pakistan and 8860 Muslims left Calcutta for East Pakistan.

These figures show a strong tendency for Muslims to go away. The difference between the two figures might be due to lesser facilities for the Hindus to come away from East Pakistan. I shall enquire into this matter. It does show however that the movement is by no means one-sided.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

71. To the Nawab of Chhattari¹

New Delhi
March 13, 1950

My dear Nawab Sahib,
Thank you for your letter of today's date.

Now that you have informed the Pakistan Government about your proposal to visit Karachi, you should pursue this matter. I think, however, that a visit to East Bengal by you and your colleagues will probably bear much more fruit.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

72. Telegram to Sri Prakasa¹

I have been greatly distressed by recent happenings in Barpeta and Goalpara. I hope Assam Government is giving every help and assistance to sufferers from disturbances and punishing those who are guilty.

2. I would have liked to visit these areas myself but cannot do so for some time. Would very much like you to visit Barpeta and Goalpara before you come here for Governors' Conference.

1. 13 March, 1950. File No. 3(15)-BL/50, M.E.A.

73. To Liaquat Ali Khan¹

New Delhi
March 13, 1950

My dear Nawabzada,
I have had no answer from you to my latest telegrams as well as my letter. I am writing this letter late at night and very early tomorrow morning, I am going to Calcutta again.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. I have taken the liberty to write these rather personal letters, although there is nothing personal in them, because it is easier to write frankly in this way than if one follows the official method. I have felt as I have told you previously, that the issues before us are so serious and so dangerous in their possible consequences, that no effort should be spared to solve them. Events have occurred repeatedly which have stirred the public mind and roused it to a pitch of excitement and passion. I have myself felt the impact of these events deeply, but I have tried, to the best of my ability, not to allow myself to be swept away by emotion. It is no small matter for me to see something happening which might well mean the ruin of all that one has lived for and worked for. I would do an ill-service to such ideals as I have possessed, if I forgot them in this hour of crisis.

3. For the last two years and a half, there has been a continuing crisis in Indo-Pakistan relations. Sometimes it appeared to tone down a little and we hoped that some kind of an equilibrium would be established. But again it blazed up and now we face it in all its intensity. Ever since this Bengal affair started, I have been convinced that the time has gone by for patchwork remedies. We might not be able to cure the disease suddenly, but we have to think and apply measures to root it out, and not merely rely on some cooling ointment. Cooling ointments are good enough in their own way, because they relieve pain for a moment, but something else has got to be done to cure the patient. As a temporary measure, to relieve tension and to enable people who were struck down by fear and panic, to regain their composure and to travel from one country to another if they chose to, I suggested a joint statement to be issued by both our Governments. That was a very small thing, which hardly scratched the surface of the problem. Even that has not been agreed to by you so far. Meanwhile, time passes and the value of it, such as it was, fades away and we have to face the big problem.

4. One of the objects of the proposed declaration was to put some fear in the minds of evil-doers and to make them realise that they would have to pay for their evil deeds. That I felt was quite essential. What has happened in the past is that people who have been notorious for murder and worse have gloried in it and profited by it and posed as heroes of the people. If that is so, then we put a premium on murder and pillage. Unless we make the burden of the ill-deed follow the evil-doer, we will not stop him from a repetition of it. I suggested to you punitive fines or collective fines, as has been the practice in the past. In addition to this, the individual concerned must be made to suffer heavy penalty and some financial burden should fall on him. On the other hand those who suffer must be helped and compensated. This would not only be rough justice but also a deterrent.

5. I have been reading Pakistan newspapers as well as statements made by various persons in Pakistan. I am not much of an admirer of the press anywhere, when it comes to moments of crisis or excitement. I have disapproved strongly of the writings in some of the Indian newspapers recently. But I must confess that the way the Pakistan press has dealt with the Bengal situation has taken my breath

away. Falsehood has been piled on falsehood and the most amazing inventions have been made. The *Dawn*, as usual, carries the palm for its inventive genius and vitriolic and malicious attacks.² How can there be peace between India and Pakistan, if this kind of campaign is carried on. If facts are disputed and these wild allegations are made, it is better to have them investigated properly and thoroughly and let the truth come out, whether we like it or not. I think it is time we dealt with this matter effectively. I am prepared to face the truth, whatever it is, and take the consequences. It is an impossible situation for these charges and calumnies to be hurled at one and no opportunity for sifting them or establishing or disproving them given.

6. Much evil has happened in East and West Bengal and in Assam. It may be that I have not got all the facts. Indeed it is difficult to get all the facts. But I think we have enough to form a general judgment. I am deeply grieved at the evil deeds that have taken place in any part of Indian territory and, to the best of my ability, I want to punish those who have done them. But I am astonished when a comparison is made between what has happened during the last six weeks in India and in Pakistan. There has been a good deal of arson and looting on both sides. I believe, from such facts as I have, that much more of this has happened in East Bengal than in any part of India. Then as regards killings, I would welcome a correct estimate based on investigation. Our own information is that killings in East Bengal were very heavy indeed and ten or twenty times as much as in India.

7. I am not trying to measure or balance evil. It is bad enough wherever it occurs and it serves little purpose to justify one act by another. But when these amazing charges are made in the public press and repeated by responsible public men, then one has to think of this.

8. Perhaps you know that while killing and arson and looting are very bad, nothing moves people's passions so much as assaults on and abduction of women. Also that forcible conversions stir people's minds and passions. If a person wants to change his religion, so far as I am concerned, he is perfectly free to do so. That should be the right of every man. But compulsion in such matters is humiliation and destruction of the spirit of man.

9. I would like you to find out if there has been a single authenticated case of assault or abduction of a woman or rape in West Bengal during these past six weeks. Or if there has been any attempt at forcible conversion. To my knowledge, there has been none. But, to my knowledge again, there have been a considerable number of such cases, both of assault on and abduction of women and forcible conversion under fear of death in East Pakistan.

10. There is one other important aspect to which attention must be drawn. It is well-known that the troubles in Dacca were started on the 10th February by the Secretariat employees there. These people nearly mobbed the Chief Secretary

2. *Dawn* reported that 10,000 people had been killed in Calcutta when in fact only 20 had been.

of the West Bengal Government and then went in procession and had a meeting. Immediately after the meeting, looting and arson and killing started. Not much investigation is necessary to prove that these Government servants were the investigators and perpetrators of all this. Individual Government servants may have misbehaved elsewhere, but I do not know of any other instance when a large group of them, functioning together, started a major disturbance and killing. If Government servants are to behave like this, what then of others, and who are the people to look to for protection. How can those people continue to live in a place where the very people who are supposed to protect them, have indulged in an orgy of killing and arson and looting.

11. I am sorry to enter into this business of making charges, but I could not help it after reading all that is being written in the Pakistan press. Also because if we have to root out this evil, we must understand it and deal with it thoroughly. I honestly believe that the root of this evil was the intense communal policy which led to Pakistan and which Pakistan has followed since. There is enough of communalism in India also today. But, at any rate, it is not the policy we pursue and we combat it. In Pakistan it is the State policy and this nurtures the feeling of hatred, violence and religious bigotry. I have no feeling against Islam. I have honoured it as one of the great religions of the world and some of my most intimate friends have been Muslims. But this conversion of the State into a citadel of communalism inevitably leads to far-reaching evil consequences. It makes the lives of all those in that State who do not accept the predominant religion, unhappy and insecure. It makes conflict with other States where other religions may prevail. It makes for continuing conflict between Pakistan and India till we exterminate each other or survive in some wretched form.

12. I have no business to interfere with your State policy or anything else that you may consider desirable in your country. But if that policy creates continuous conflict and leads us to the verge of complete break, then obviously I am much interested in it, as it concerns me and my country. Also if it leads to frequent killing, arson and looting and abduction of women and all the rest of it, and demoralisation of vast numbers of human beings who have been and are intimately connected with us, then I am affected.

13. I have written to you frankly, because the utmost frankness is necessary when dealing with these tremendous issues affecting vast populations. We must face them and try to solve them instead of trying to injure each other all the time and drifting to major conflict. There has been an extraordinarily unintelligent charge brought against India that we seek to put an end to Pakistan or to compel it to join India. Some foolish persons may have said so.³ But if anything is certain, it

3. The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha, meeting at Bombay in February 1950, declared that "it will strive for the reunion of the two separated parts of the country."

is this: that no intelligent Indian wants that to happen for the simple reason that it would be bad for India. We want to live at peace with Pakistan and we would rejoice in having normal friendly relations with it so that both countries may cooperate and prosper. We are on the brink of grave dangers and, as I have said above, any patchwork remedies are of little use now. I am prepared to meet you to discuss these matters in all seriousness before it becomes too late to discuss them.

14. I trust you will appreciate the spirit in which I have written this letter and forgive me for my frankness. I would not be true to myself or to you, if I did not tell you how I felt.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

74. Notes on Visit to Calcutta

1¹

I arrived here soon after 11 forenoon. Immediately after reaching Government House, I had a talk with the Governor and Dr Roy. Dr Roy told me that the situation both in Calcutta and East Bengal had been fairly calm and no particular incident had taken place. Hindu refugees were pouring in West Bengal and Muslims were going out. Inadequate guard was now given by the Pakistan authorities on the trains bringing the Hindu refugees, but these refugees had to face a lot of trouble at the border stations. There was the customs, then the police, then the Ansars,² and then the Jana Gana, i.e. just a miscellaneous collection of people. All of these people helped to relieve the refugees of what they possessed under some pretext or other, with the result that the refugees arrived bare-handed and with little or nothing with them. Apart from this, there had been no trouble.

Dr Roy mentioned that large numbers of Muslims were going out. On the whole, the number of Hindu refugees coming in was greater. As to this I found subsequently that there was a difference of opinion. I am trying to get exact figures.

After Dr Roy left, I had a long talk with Dr Katju about the general situation and what we should do. He was mostly a listener and we are supposed to continue this talk later.

1. Calcutta, 14 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. The East Bengal Government had allowed the formation of a corps called Ansars a sort of voluntary home guards of untrained ruffians, who freely indulged in atrocities against the Hindus in villages where there were few policemen.

After lunch I had a talk with Mridula Sarabhai who had returned from Dacca this morning after three days' stay there. She informed me that she was convinced that in both the Bengals the situation has been more or less brought under control. The only difficulty now was the press which was full, not of recent incidents, but of past incidents. Scare-headlines were given about these past incidents and this gave the impression to unwary readers that something new was happening. In any event, it had an exciting effect on the average person and might lead to further trouble. The facts given in recent press releases from New Delhi were also far from authentic, although they were based on the reports of our Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca. Many Hindus in Dacca thought that the figures supplied were considerably exaggerated. They were based on hearsay and not on any real investigation.

Mridula Sarabhai had many interviews with the East Pakistan officials and gathered the impression that they were eager to give facilities to impartial observers to find out facts for themselves. They were also taking up a firm line with their own officials and had taken strong action against some offenders, especially those who had attacked women and children. In some places, abducted women had been recovered and restored to their relatives. The Chief Secretary, East Bengal Government, invited Mridula Sarabhai to visit various places and report to him about her impression. He agreed to the starting of two womens' homes for Muslim and non-Muslim women refugees. Orders had been issued to give all help to refugee women and children in distress. According to the East Pakistan Government, there had not been any large-scale abductions, nor had they heard much about forced conversions. In any event, they were prepared to take strong action where their attention was drawn to such cases.

I met later a number of selected newspaper editors—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Jugantar*, *Hindusthan Standard*, etc., etc.—and had a long talk with them. They agreed that no special incident had happened here or in East Bengal during the last few days, but the situation was tense and people expected some decision in regard to action by the Central Government. Many people hoped that some kind of military action will be taken. I discussed this question with them at some length and pointed out the consequences, short term and long term. They agreed that there were grave dangers and perhaps it would not be right to invite those dangers. Nevertheless, they felt that something should be done in order to soothe public feeling. What that something might be, short of military action, was not quite clear. It appeared that when their mind did not approve of military action, their hearts and emotions demanded it and they saw no way of reconciling this difference. They impressed upon me that feeling was high in Calcutta.

They also told me that something must be done about the refugees arriving here being despoiled of the few possessions they carried with them. I met

Mr Lahiry,³ the General Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, who came with his companion. He talked most unintelligently and could only refer to war. If not war, then unofficial raids by organised youngmen with the secret help apparently of the authorities. I pointed out to him that this could not possibly be permitted and would only do harm. He talked in the strain of a Hindu state from which Muslims had been pushed out. I told him that I found him to be a complete disciple of Mr Jinnah and that I had no intention of succumbing to Jinnah's theory after having fought it all my life.

I then met a group of Congressmen and Ministers. Dr Roy was also present. We discussed the situation for some time. Shri Satish Chandra Das Gupta⁴ joined us a little later and gave us a first-hand account of Dacca, Feni, Noakhali and some other places. In regard to Barisal etc., he gave a second-hand account.

Shri Das Gupta told us that the Pakistan Government was acting firmly and was in control of the situation. He had no doubt that it was their deliberate policy to check any misbehaviour and they were punishing some of their officials and others who had misbehaved. They felt that things had gone too far and had to be checked. They were also frightened by the large influx of Muslim refugees into East Bengal. Exact figures were lacking, but Pakistan people talked of about 100,000 Muslim refugees having gone there, largely from Assam (Goalpara and Barpeta). This had become a terrific problem for them as their resources were very limited.

Shri Das Gupta had a very bad opinion of the East Bengal Premier, but he gave credit to a number of other officers of the East Pakistan Government for the work they were doing. In his opinion, not more than 200 people were killed in Dacca city and he considered the larger figures that had been given as grossly exaggerated. In Feni, about 20 or 30 persons had been killed. This was a local affair, i.e. the local officials had connived at it. In Noakhali, nothing had happened. In Barisal, however, (he had not visited it) conditions had been worst of all and it was impossible to say how many people had been killed. They may amount to any figure upto 500, less or more. Altogether his estimate of killings in East Bengal during the last few weeks was considerably under 1000, apart from what happened in the railway trains about which it was impossible to have any data.

3. Ashutosh Lahiry (b. 1892); detained in the Andamans for revolutionary activities, 1915-22; served on editorial staff of the *Servant*, 1922-26; joined Hindu Mahasabha, 1924; detained in connection with the Watson shooting case, 1932-36; General Secretary, Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha, 1937; General Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, 1940-48; member, Bengal Assembly, 1943-45.
4. (1880-1979); arrested during the freedom struggle; participated in the constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi; founder of Khadi Pratishthan at Sodepur near Calcutta; awarded Bajaj Award, 1978; author of *The Cow in India*, *Home and Village Doctor*, *Khadi Manual*, *Cottage Match Factory*, *Gobar Gas Plant*, *Bone Meal Fertiliser* and many other books.

He said that cases of abduction had been relatively few, in Dacca practically none. What usually happened was that some women were taken away and returned a day after. He added, but sorrowfully, that this had long been the practice in East Bengal throughout the British period.

He said that in spite of everything, relations between the local Muslims and Hindus were not bad, although some of these Muslims had been excited and helped them in looting etc. I asked him what the state of feeling was among the Hindu population. He said that they were thoroughly demoralised, but as conditions improved their fright became a little less. Many of them wanted to come away. I asked him how many would come away if full facilities were offered to them to come immediately. He said that he did not think more than 200,000 or so would come. It might be a little more, but certainly only a small proportion of the Hindu population would come, unless some major events happened later.

He expressed his very strong disapproval of talk of war. He said that this would be a disaster of the greatest magnitude for both countries and must be avoided at all costs. The only way was to behave decently ourselves and thus help the other party also to behave decently.

We had a conference later with officers connected with relief and rehabilitation. Dr Roy was present, also S.K. Dey and Nikhil Sen. It was decided that the Ranaghat temporary camp should be placed under Nikhil Sen, who could function on behalf of the Central Government. The West Bengal Government would give him help in every way. This camp already had about 12,000 persons and about five to seven thousand were arriving daily. Something had to be done immediately to add to their accommodation somewhere or to send some of these refugees to other States. This matter of sending them to other States is to be discussed tomorrow with Mr Rao, Joint Secretary, Rehabilitation Ministry, who has just been to Assam. Some places in other provinces should be specified immediately so that the people might be sent.

S.K. Dey said that arrangements should be made for some kind of a camp to have at least 100,000 persons. This would not be a permanent camp and would be in the nature of a transit one, but still it would last for some time. Unless a big camp like this was arranged for, the city of Calcutta would itself become something in the nature of a camp. This general proposal was agreed to and the site will be selected by Dey in the company of the Bengal officials.

Dey offered his services in two ways: firstly, to arrange for work centres and training in a large camp, and secondly, to start a township, more or less on the lines of Nilokheri. He was prepared to take responsibility for both these. It was decided that he should select suitable sites and should be given freedom to go ahead. Dey laid great stress on no doles being given after the first few days and work being provided however uneconomic that might be. Nikhil Sen agreed and said that a week should be the outright limit for doles to able-bodied men.

It was agreed that I should visit Ranaghat camp tomorrow morning.

I had a talk with some General Managers of Railways who came for dinner. One of them was dealing with the refugees here. He gave me to understand that far more Muslims were going away than Hindus were arriving from East Bengal. The proportion generally was 3000 Muslims going away in a train and 2200 Hindus arriving per train. He pointed out some difficulties in the way of Hindu refugees crossing the border. Most of the Pakistan trains stopped on the other side of the border and a few came over. Our trains did not cross the border as our crews were afraid of doing so. The result was that a number of passengers had to walk across the border from one station to the other. This seemed to be a very foolish arrangement and it should be possible to do something about it, more especially now when the fear of incidents has largely subsided.

II¹

Yesterday I saw Dr P.C. Ghosh also. In his opinion, war would be a disaster of the first magnitude and must be avoided.

This morning I went to Ranaghat camp. Dr Roy and others accompanied me. This is a kind of major transit camp for East Bengal refugees. There were, in fact, two camps and about 12,000 persons were lodged there. Arrangements had been made for these camps to be put under Nikhil Sen, who will represent the Central Government.

I was surprised to find that most of the refugees had plenty of luggage with them. Almost all had pots and pans and kitchen utensils. Most had beddings and some had trunks. These refugees had been coming in during the last two weeks and some of them arrived the day before. This proved that they were not deprived of their belongings *en route*. On enquiry several of them told us that they had given some small sums of money to the Pakistani people at the border. A number of women had gold bangles on. This evidence disproved the general statement which was being widely made that East Bengal refugees were being deprived of everything.

I asked many of the refugees why they had come. No one said that they had been attacked or that their houses had been looted or burnt. Their general reply was that they had heard that this was being done and being frightened they came away.

On the way back we visited a refugee colony being built at Howrah. Large numbers of small houses at Rs. 4,000 each had been built around the airfield, utilising the bricks, etc., of the air strips. The houses were empty.

On return I gave a note to Amal Home,² the Director of Publicity of West Bengal for the editors of papers. This was not meant for publication. I emphasised in this note that I had thoroughly disapproved of the way these newspapers were dealing with the situation. What I have seen here has upset me. There seems to be a deliberate desire to spread panic and a vast scare. It appeared that some old faint pictures of naked women, which were used in the Punjab and Delhi in 1947, were being circulated here to anger people.

I met an old Muslim friend from Allahabad, a strong nationalist and a great opponent to the Muslim League. He told me that the Muslims here were in an extremely panicky condition and were leaving in large numbers. His estimate of the Muslims who had already left Calcutta was anything between 100,000 and 150,000. This was during the last five weeks. I was astonished at this number and did not believe it, but later official figures rather corroborated it.

I met Rao, Nikhil Sen and S.K. Dey of our Ministry of Rehabilitation to discuss the arrangement of camps, etc. and the other measures to be taken.

I had long talk with Major-General Roy³ about the military situation and the disposition of troops. Later, I met the English managers of the Steamship Company which plies services up and down the rivers of Bengal. They gave us information of what services they were running and what they could run in case of need, provided coal is supplied. I also met the General Manager of the Railway here.

Later, I met a large group representing the Peace Committee of Calcutta. This consisted of both Hindus and Muslims and Dr P.C. Ghosh was chairman. They told me what was happening in the city and were dissatisfied at the way the Muslims were being treated and encouraged to go away. One interesting fact was brought to my notice. There has been considerable publicity about a bomb which was said to have burst in a Muslim's house and people had been arrested. It transpired that Hindus had confessed to have placed that bomb there in order to get the Muslims into trouble.

Complaints have also reached me that the Muslims of Sealdah station were harassed greatly and there was always some danger of stabbing. In Calcutta yesterday and today six stabbings of Muslims took place.

Amtus Salam, who is just back from Dacca, came to see me. She told me that conditions were peaceful there and that the Government had done something, though not much, to rehabilitate the Hindus who had been in camps. The Hindus in Dacca were very anxious that nothing untoward should happen in West Bengal as this would react upon them.

2. (1894-1975); worked for the *Bengali* and *The Tribune*; editor, *Independent* (Allahabad) for some time and of *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, 1929-1949; Director of Publicity, Government of West Bengal, 1949-52 and its Chief Information Officer in 1952.
3. Maj. Gen. S.B. Roy, G.O.C. of Calcutta, who was in charge of the army in support of the civil authorities.

I met Mr P.L. Roy⁴ of Barisal who gave me an account of what happened there. Dr B.C. Roy has supplied me with the following figures. These are from the 13th February to the 13th March:

Hindu refugees coming from Pakistan—93,000

Muslims going away from Calcutta to Pakistan—87,000

This does not include Hindu arrivals on foot or by some other route. Nor is it proved how many Muslims left Calcutta for other parts of India.

Yesterday, Hindu refugee arrivals were 14,000 and Muslims going away from Calcutta 10,000.

Thus the total till yesterday for Hindu arrivals was 107,000 and for Muslims going away to Pakistan from Calcutta 97,000.

From all accounts received, a large number of Muslims have been driven out of Assam into Pakistan. Thus it will appear that more Muslims have left India for Pakistan than Hindus who have come here from Pakistan.

Muslim population of Calcutta was 8,00,000. Nearly half of these were from East Bengal. Thus far over 12 per cent of them have left. Actually about 15 per cent of them left, some going to other parts of India. The process of both arrivals and departures is continuing.

I have forgotten to mention the arrivals and departures by air. These are in all 400 to 500 a day now. Thus about 10,000 should be added to the above figure for both arrivals and departures.

4. Pareshlal Roy (1898-1979); renowned boxer; friend of Nehru at Cambridge; served in the two World Wars.

75. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have just received in Calcutta your 2 telegrams Nos. 1292² and 1293³ 13th March. Authoritative accounts of happenings in India have been appearing in

1. Calcutta, 15 March 1950, J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali referred to Nehru's telegrams of 10 and 11 March (see *ante*, items 60 and 65). He felt that Nehru had not fully described the incidents in Goalpara and C.P. and the incidents in the U.P. in connection with the Holi festival were "all the more deplorable."
3. Liaquat Ali had asked for Nehru's assurance that no armed members of the R.S.S. or of the private force organised by the League for Protection of the Rights of Minorities were concentrated around East Bengal.

press.⁴ I have gladly sent you information when you have asked for it. Surely you do not expect me to supply information generally or specifically about conditions in India or what our Government does.

2. You have got mixed up between Howrah and Hooghly. If you refer to my previous telegrams you will see casualties were at Hooghly.

3. I informed you that there were no troop concentrations on East Bengal border. We shall of course take necessary precautions to protect our borders from any untoward happening. We do not permit or tolerate any private armed forces. I might inform you that we have had reports of Ansars coming across our borders occasionally.⁵ One of our small relief centres at Jaynagar near Banpur border manned by women workers was visited by Ansars recently.

4. As I have written to you in my letter dated 13th March it has become essential for us to deal with this entire problem which cannot be solved by partial and patchwork remedies. In view of developing situation and widespread fear mere assurances do not go, far more especially when little faith is put on them. I am anxious to avoid by every means possible to me any further deterioration but this cannot be done by mere expression of wish.

5. I impressed on you that while I do not want to encourage large-scale migrations, facilities and protection for travel have become essential to prevent greater panic and greater desire to migrate. I am glad that there has been improvement in this respect. I am sure that if proper facilities are given large-scale migrations will not take place after the first rush is over.

6. In this connection I should like to point to you that refugees coming from East Bengal are greatly harassed at border stations in Pakistan. They have not only to pass through customs which can be understood but they have then to pass a barrage of three separate groups — police, Ansars and miscellaneous crowd who call themselves Jana Gana. In course of this they are relieved of their money and belongings. I trust arrangements will be made to prevent this happening and refugees will be permitted to bring personal belongings and some money; otherwise they produce unsettling effect and create discontent.

7. We shall have to consider later question of compensation for those who have suffered on either side. Immediately steps should be taken to protect their properties so that they might not be seized by unauthorised persons.

4. Liaquat Ali had written: "Till the receipt of your present telegram no authoritative statement of happenings in India since the February 26th was received by me from you. No information of what was being done by your Government was vouchsafed to me till your telegram arrived here."

5. Liaquat Ali wrote that reports of Ansar infiltrations into India were entirely without foundation.

76. To B.C. Roy¹

Calcutta
March 16, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

The Pakistani press contains references to harassment and ill-treatment of Muslims at Sealdah station. I enquired about this from some people who came to see me, both Hindus and Muslims. Independently they told me that this was so and indeed that there was some danger of stabbing of Muslims there.

Amtus Salam, who used to be with Gandhiji, has come back from Dacca. She tells me that some women, whom she met there (one of these used to go to Gandhiji) also complained of a great deal of harassment at Sealdah station when she was leaving Calcutta some days ago. This woman has written rather a pathetic letter to me saying that it has broken her heart to have to leave India which was her home, but conditions became impossible for her to stay on here.

I hope you will issue directions for the proper treatment and protection of Muslims at Sealdah station. This is just what we are claiming from Pakistan and we cannot behave otherwise ourselves.

It is clear that Muslims in Calcutta are in a state of extreme panic. Their departure in large numbers is sufficient proof of this.

I am informed that Hindus are taking forcible possession of many Muslim houses in Hirzapur area.

I was told today that a Hindu confessed placing a bomb in a Muslim's house so as to get the Muslim into trouble.

I gave a note to Amal Home today to be shown to some newspaper editors. I asked him to give you a copy. I feel that Calcutta papers are responsible for a great deal of mischief and this must be brought home to them. They are playing very irresponsibly with fire.

Among the worst papers appear to be the *R.S.S. Swastika*, *Jugantar*, *Basumati* and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

The *Azad* paper of Dacca is coming here and doing a good deal of mischief.

Amtus Salam suggested that separate compartments might be provided for Muslims going away from Calcutta by train. This is what the Pakistan people are doing for the Hindus coming here. This will afford protection to them.

The Peace Committee people came to see me today and, among other things, asked for help from the police in order to trace lost people. I understand some people have a tendency to be separated from their families and get lost. This apparently applies to Muslims specially in the circumstances.

The Peace Committee people also said that some Muslim workers who were trying to get back the Muslims to their houses have been arrested apparently because they were found in the neighbourhood.

Amtus Salam told me that the East Bengal Government had done something (not much) towards rehabilitating Hindus. They had given some money to each family and sent them back to their old homes. This had produced some impression. She suggested that a beginning might be made towards rehabilitating the Muslims here who had fled from their houses or whose houses had been destroyed. I understand that a very large number of houses were destroyed in Maniktola etc.

Among the Muslim houses raided by local Hindus and East Bengal refugees is said to be House No. 2, Chhaku Khansaman lane, Elmhirst Street. It is reported that the inmates were forcibly driven out and their belongings were thrown out.

According to both French reports and other reports, Ram Chatterjee and Shishi are rather notorious gangsters of Chandernagore. The French say that they have committed a good few murders. Apparently, they were partly responsible for the trouble in Chandernagore and round about. I am told that they have been appointed as relief workers for Muslim refugees in Chandernagore and are securing certificates of good character from the Muslims.

I am mentioning this as it has been decided to make a further change in the administration of Chandernagore.

You remember that the merchants who came to see me were very anxious that their Muslim workers should go to the factories. Some have apparently gone back, but on the other hand, I understand that there is a tendency to push them away to Pakistan by train. If they go away, our production will suffer.

Individual stabbings appear to continue in and round about Calcutta. It is difficult to deal with this kind of thing. Nevertheless, this has a very bad effect both in India and in Pakistan. On the whole, East Bengal appears to be, for the moment, free from such incidents.

The Hindu Mahasabha and R.S.S. propaganda both for war and for a Hindu State has a very bad effect in the present tense situation. I wonder if this can be discouraged.

Yours,
Jawahar

77. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

I have just received in Calcutta your three telegrams Nos. 1291 and 1294 of 13th March and 1302 of 14th March.

I regret I cannot accept explanation of Goalundo steamer incident.² On the face of it this explanation is extraordinary and our information is opposed to this.

Regarding declaration would like you to consider matters referred to in my letter to you dated 13th March.³ I feel that at this stage mere repetition of what has been separately said already would be rather strange and produce little impression. Some reference to basic problems and method of implementation appears necessary.

I am returning to Delhi this afternoon.

1. Calcutta. Undated. Probably sent on 16 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had written on 13 March that facts as ascertained from the passengers on the steamer Goalundo were that at Rajkhara some Muslims and Hindus approached passengers and requested them not to leave their homes unnecessarily for West Bengal only to be put to extreme discomfort as refugees. About 200 passengers after persuasion disembarked and later took a steamer back to their homes. Allegations of attacks and molestation by local hooligans on these people were said to be false.
3. On 14 March, Liaquat Ali had referred to his modifications made in an earlier telegram and the suggestion that the declaration should be issued on 16 March without any further delay.

78. To V.K. Krishna Menon¹

New Delhi
March 16, 1950

My dear Krishna,

I have just returned from my second visit to Calcutta. There are a number of letters from you which demand a reply. I shall deal with them as soon as I can.

This is just a brief note. You will realise that this Bengal situation is absorbing a good deal of my time and energy. There is a concerted effort, backed by strong

1. J.N. Collection.

forces, to drive us into war with Pakistan. The most amazing exaggerations and hysterical statements and writing are taking place both in Pakistan and India. The problem is extraordinarily difficult. At present practically every Hindu in Eastern Pakistan is in a state of utter demoralisation and fright and wants to come away. To a slightly lesser extent that applies to the Muslims in West Bengal and Assam. Already large numbers have travelled from one country to another under pressure of circumstances. Probably this process may continue till another half million come over and then it may lessen. That of course depends on circumstances and what happens in between. But the major problem remains. The basic policy of Pakistan makes it very difficult for non-Muslims to carry on there and I believe there is a definite attempt to push out the upper layers of the population and try to convert many of the others. The reactions in India to this are equally bad.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

79. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi
March 16, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I just returned from Calcutta and received your two letters of the 13th March. Thank you for them.

My visit to Calcutta has not cleared my mind, though I am feeling somewhat calmer than I have done for some time past. Perhaps that is just a reaction to a continued state of tension, to which one adapts oneself.

The amount of exaggeration and hysterical talk and writing that is going on both in Pakistan and India is quite extraordinary. I am pressed all round for what is called "action". This is a euphemism for war. I do not react to it favourably and, being perverse, hate being bullied. Nevertheless, the situation is exceedingly difficult and I cannot just see how we can carry on in the way we have done.

In my last letter to you I suggested that you might come here for a few days quietly about the end of this month, when Edwina will also be here. I think she is due to arrive here on the 22nd or 23rd and will stay for possibly five or six days. Your presence here and the talks we could have would be extraordinarily helpful to all of us, but more especially to me. I see no impropriety in your coming here.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

80. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Your telegram 1350 dated March 17th.² I regret I am not able to accept the figures of persons killed in East Bengal which is given by you. We have a number of lists compiled on the spot of persons killed in Barisal alone and they far exceeded the number given by you. Besides the attack on the two trains on 28th February which you mention, many trains were attacked during the height of the disturbances between Brahmanbaria and Bhairab Bazar³ in Tipperah district and at and near Sitakund in Chittagong district. The number of casualties in these attacks is believed to have been very heavy. A number of persons were also killed in the attack on the Dacca Mail near Rajbari on 25th February. In view of the persistent reports current in West Bengal and other parts of India that the number killed during the disturbances in East Bengal could be counted in many thousands, many unofficial enquiries were made of us about authentic information regarding casualties. To withhold such information as we possessed would have led to a worsening of the situation.

1. New Delhi, 18 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Liaquat Ali had telegraphed that *The Times of India* of 14 March and *The Statesman* of 15 March had published exaggerated estimates of loss of life and property in East Bengal. According to him throughout East Bengal 222 were killed and 276 wounded till 27 February. In train attacks on 28 February, 28 were killed and 22 wounded.
3. Systematic attacks on trains passing through Bhairab Bazar were made on the 11, 12, 13, and 14 February. Hindu passengers were murdered and thrown out of trains.

81. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi
March 19, 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I feel inclined to write to you often, but then I desist from doing so. Why should I pass on my troubles to you? Of course, if you had been here, I would have had frequent talks with you and profit by them. Matters are coming to a head in more ways than one and I do not quite know what the future is going to be, either from the personal point of view or the national. The personal does not matter very much, except that it is somehow tied up with the national.

Some days ago, Archibald Nye mentioned to me that he had suggested to the U.K. Government that they might invite you to pay a visit to England as their guest. The U.K. Government had agreed to do so. I do not think he has mentioned this matter to you and he wanted to have my reactions first. I told him that I would

1. J.N. Collection.

think about it. It would be a good thing if you went, but I rather doubt if you would be able to go soon.

I quite forgot about what Nye had told me and have not mentioned it to anyone here thus far. Quite independently of this, it struck me that your visit abroad, more especially to England and the United States, might be very helpful to us in many ways. That is to say that you could go abroad as an Ambassador at large. You could spend some time in England, chiefly in London and visiting some other places there, and then you could go to the United States and visit some places there. It would be a quiet tour, meeting people and having talks with them. I cannot think of a better person than you to explain our present position and the problems before us to important people in England and America. You would have no special mission and you would be free to stay as long as you liked and meet anyone you liked.

It is unfortunate that India is not very popular at the present moment in foreign countries. Our foreign publicity is criticised severely and there is some justification for that criticism. But I think there is something more to it than that. It is difficult of course for any person to see his own errors and shortcomings and nations are even worse in this respect than individuals. We have made many mistakes. Nevertheless, I do feel that we have a good case and intelligent people should understand it, if it was properly put to them.

The Bengal situation has brought matters to a head and I just do not know what might happen. You warn me against war, and yet many people clamour for it. Hardly anyone has any realisation of what war means, because we have had no real experience of it. They have even less realisation of the consequences of war, more especially in a country like India with its mixed population. There are quite a large number of persons in Europe who have known war and who have come to the conclusion that war does not solve any problem, even victorious war. Unfortunately that lesson has yet to be learnt in India. People seem to think here that war is some distant and brave affair, which can be concluded within a brief period.

The situation is so complicated and difficult that even I, with all my abhorrence of war and my appreciation of its consequences cannot rule it out completely. This because the alternative seems to me sometimes to be worse.

Edwina is coming here on the 22nd March afternoon and likely to stay here till the 1st April. May I repeat my invitation to you to come to Delhi about that time for a few days.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

82. To V.K. Krishna Menon¹

New Delhi
March 20, 1950

My dear Krishna,

I want to tell you that for a variety of reasons, in which I need not go now, I have decided to give up the Prime Ministership fairly soon. This thought has long hovered in my mind and indeed I had mentioned it to two or three persons here, including the President. Events in East Bengal and their reactions have made me think furiously and I feel I am not of much use in my present capacity. There is far too much friction and a pulling in different directions and intrigues. It is my intention to wait for the passing of the Budget and then to present my resignation and the resignation of the Cabinet to the President. This, in any event, has to be done, as a new Council of Ministers has to be formed under the new Constitution. Probably I shall do this in about a fortnight's time from now.

What the future will hold, I do not know. But I am clear in my mind that I should adhere to this resolution. Of course, all kinds of pressure will be brought to bear upon me to change my mind. But I must have a period free from office and I want others to shoulder the burden. This will be good training and experience for them. For myself, I should like to devote myself specially to this Bengal situation. How exactly, I do not know. I might go to East Bengal, if the Pakistan people let me. We are drifting rapidly towards disaster. War is disaster enough, but something even worse than normal war appears in prospect. Perhaps the psychological shock of some action by me might make a little difference. It is worth trying.

I would not like you to leave your post, because I have retired from the scene. You should keep going and wait for developments, such as they may be.

Please do not mention this to anybody.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

83. Correct Figures of Migrations¹

It is urgently necessary that we should get correct figures for Hindus coming from Pakistan to East Bengal and Assam and Muslims going to Pakistan from West Bengal and Assam. These figures are of course going up day by day, but we should

1. Note to Additional Foreign Secretary, 20 March 1950. File No. 10-1/50-BL, M.E.A.

try to get as up to date figures as possible. There are three sources which can supply these figures—State Governments (West Bengal and Assam) Railways and Military. Mr Gopalaswami Ayyangar is obtaining the figures from Railways. You might ask the Defence people to get figures from the local military. You should address the West Bengal and Assam Governments directly and ask them to send their figures after checking up with military and Railways. The figures should include those who travel by train, air, steamer boat and foot. If accurate figures cannot be obtained, the nearest approximate figures should be supplied. There should be no delay in this.

I sent you Dr S.P. Mookerjee's letter today in which he gave a number of instances of outrages etc. I should like to have your note on it, so that we might send a telegram to Pakistan.

84. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi

March 20, 1950

My dear Mr President,

As you know, I have been greatly troubled in my mind during recent weeks. Even before the Bengal occurrences, various events and developments made me wonder if my continuing as Prime Minister was serving any worthwhile purpose. I mentioned this to you and confided to you that it was my desire not to continue as Prime Minister.² This feeling has grown upon me even more since the tragedy in Bengal.

Very soon after the disturbances in East and West Bengal last month, the idea struck me forcibly that I could serve the cause better by going in a personal capacity to East Bengal, if I was permitted to do so, and, in any event, for me to devote myself largely in some way or other to the Bengal problem. In the first statement I made in Parliament regarding Bengal, I said that I wished to devote myself particularly to the Bengal and Kashmir problems. I had in mind then my retirement from the Prime Ministership.

It seemed to me that while necessary governmental action of course had to be taken to meet this situation, what was even more necessary was a psychological and personal approach to this problem. I am not vain enough to think that any such approach on my part would make a very great difference. Nevertheless, I felt it was worth trying, as every other course seemed to lead to a further complication of an already intricate and difficult problem.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *post*, pp. 427-431.

I had long felt disturbed and distressed at the trend of events in India and the way people's minds were turning to thoughts and courses of action which were entirely opposed to all the ideals many of us had held dear. For thirty years or more we had worked for these ideals and objectives and now one by one they faded away under stress of uncontrollable events. We became passive agents of an evil destiny and the light that had thus far illumined our hearts became dimmer and dimmer.

I felt also that I was not truly representing the wishes of a large number of members of Parliament and perhaps of the people outside. Some kind of a hiatus existed between them and me. Our objectives even seemed to be different. They liked me well enough and honoured me with their affection. But they thought and felt differently from me. I seemed to come in their way and they, to some extent, came in my way. This was not a happy state of affairs and it produced a measure of frustration on both sides.

Ever since the Republic came into being, and even before, I have been thinking of the formation of new Council of Ministers as required by the Constitution. At first I hoped that this would take place very soon after your assumption of office. Then came the Budget session of Parliament and it seemed to me that any change just then would be rather upsetting. So we carried on in the old way and I decided that the time to make the change would be soon after the Budget was passed. That time is coming now and in any event a new Council of Ministers has to be formed. That new Council may of course contain the old Ministers, or many of them.

This impending change has given me an opportunity, without any fuss or trouble, to give effect to the powerful urge which has been moving me for some time. I feel that I have practically exhausted my utility in my present high office and that I can serve my country and my people better in other ways. My heart is elsewhere and I long to go to the people and to tell them how I feel. If they accept what I say, well and good. If not, then also I shall have done what I felt like doing. In particular, I would like to devote myself for some time at least to the Bengal problem in its many aspects.

I have discussed with you some of these aspects and some of the far-reaching consequences that must inevitably flow from the course of events. Our whole future is at stake and each one of us has to think, as earnestly and deeply as he can, about his present duty. I have given much thought to this matter and the conclusion I have arrived at is that I should function in some other capacity for some time at least.

At this evening's Cabinet meeting, I gave expression to some of these ideas. While I had discussed them with one or two members previously, most of my other colleagues had not been taken into my confidence. I thought it only fair to them and to myself that I should let them have a glimpse into my mind.

It is my intention, soon after the Budget is passed, to offer you my resignation and together with it, the resignation of the present Cabinet. Thereupon a new Council

of Ministers will have to be formed. I would beg of you then not to charge me with this responsibility.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

85. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit¹

New Delhi
March 20, 1950

Dear Nan,

... I am writing to you today, however, rather briefly, to tell you about something which you may consider of some importance. Do you remember my hinting to you, just before you went, about the possibility of my resignation from the Prime Ministership. I can advance very many reasons for this and it would be possible to advance a good many reasons against it. But the real reason is a hunch or call it what you will. Recent developments have driven me more and more to the same conclusion. These developments have taken place both in our New Delhi sphere and in Bengal. The Bengal situation is developing very dangerously for the future of India. I feel troubled at the prospect and my whole nature rebels against sitting here in an office, when I should be up and doing. Of course, a Prime Minister can do much. But in the circumstances I cannot do much. I want to go back for a while at least to the people and to try to influence them. Many of them are moving in a wrong direction. I am not vain enough to imagine that I can make very much difference. Indeed I do not quite know what I shall do. But negatively, I feel sure that my mere going away will do good and will shake up things.

So today I spoke frankly and quietly to the Cabinet. I have also written to the President. This does not mean that I am resigning immediately. It is some kind of a previous notice which I thought only fair to all parties concerned. My present intention is to take further action sometime in the first week of April, after the budget is passed.

Presumably I shall go to Allahabad from here soon after and then possibly to Bengal. But I really do not know what I shall do then.

I want to tell you not to worry at all. Also that you must stick to your post, unless something happens which makes it impossible for you to do so. It would

be improper and undesirable for you to take any action, simply because I have faded out of the Governmental picture.

This must of course be kept absolutely secret.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

86. To C.R. Attlee¹

New Delhi
March 20, 1950

My dear Attlee,

You have enough burdens to carry and I have no desire to add to them. And yet I feel that I should write to you and put you in touch with recent happenings in India in regard to Indo-Pakistan relations. A great deal of importance has been attached in the past two years or more to the Kashmir affair, and undoubtedly, it was and is important. From our point of view, it could have been settled long ago and much more easily, if it had been dealt with properly, but unfortunately, some of the basic facts of the situation were repeatedly ignored and we managed to get more and more entangled in details.

2. However, it is not about Kashmir that I am writing, but about something which is far more important and dangerous in its consequences. This is the Bengal situation, as it has arisen in the course of the past three months. I am writing to you not with the object of asking you to do anything in this matter, but rather to keep you informed of the background and the present state of affairs. I feel I owe this to you.

3. We accepted Pakistan and the partition of India with great reluctance, but nevertheless firmly, in the hope that this would give us peace and an opportunity of devoting ourselves peacefully to the many problems that we had to face. We hoped that Pakistan would do likewise and, as old-time passions cooled, there would progressively be more and more cooperation between India and Pakistan. Immediately after partition came the terrible killing and the huge migrations in the Punjab. More than ten million people were uprooted from Pakistan and India and a legacy of passion and hatred was left by these terrible happenings. That was a time of great trial for us. Fortunately for us we had Gandhiji with us then and, largely because of him, we stopped this madness from spreading much beyond

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

the Punjab. And then we set ourselves to find another equilibrium and to heal the deep wounds that had been caused.

4. Partition left huge minorities on either side, though larger in India than Pakistan. It was assumed, as the very basis of partition, and assurances to this effect were freely given, that the minorities on both sides would be given full protection. We hoped that after the tremendous upheaval in the Punjab to which I have referred, the minorities would find a secure and honourable place in both countries. We tried our utmost in India, both in theory and practice, to give the Muslim minority the same position and opportunity as others had. Muslims occupied and occupy the highest places in the State, memberships of the Central and Provincial Cabinets, Governorships, Ambassadorships, Federal Court Judgeships, High Court Judgeships, high executive offices and the like. They were and are members of our political parties like the Congress. In Pakistan the Hindus did not and do not occupy any important place and cannot even be members of the Muslim League Party which controlled the Government. That party itself is communal and thus there is not even a chance for a non-Muslim to influence its work or decisions.

5. As a result of the migrations after the partition, the Frontier Province and West Punjab were almost completely cleared of Hindus and Sikhs. East Punjab was also almost completely cleared of Muslims. But we made a great effort and brought back many Muslims to the East Punjab and I believe there are over 100,000 of them there now. Many thousands of Muslims, who had gone away from Delhi, also returned. It was Gandhiji's policy that we should try to bring back as many people as possible.

6. The provinces of Sind and East Bengal were not affected, to any great extent, by those early migrations. But conditions in both these provinces continued to be such that non-Muslims felt unhappy there and saw no chance of fitting into the new order. About 27 per cent of the population of Sind was Hindus, who were largely professional and business people—lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers, merchants, etc. In East Bengal about a third of the population, numbering 16 millions were Hindus. Many people believe that the Pakistan Government deliberately followed a policy in both Sind and East Bengal of squeezing out the Hindus. Whether they did so or not, many of their minor officials functioned in that way, and there was the continuous pressure from the Muslim refugees who had come from India, mainly from the East Punjab. Even apart from this, the whole conception of the State in Pakistan, that is a theocratic Islamic State, was such that non-Muslims could only have some kind of inferior position in it. The atmosphere was oppressive and religious bigotry and hatred of the Hindus were the prevailing sentiments.

7. And so, a gradual migration of the Hindus started from Sind and East Bengal. Occasionally some incident took place, which accelerated this process. This went on till Sind had practically no Hindu population left, except for the sweepers who were not permitted to leave by the Government there, as their services were required.

Sind was thus added to West Punjab and the Frontier Province as an area where the minority problem had practically been solved by the elimination of the minority.

8. Meanwhile, the gradual migration of Hindus from East Bengal also continued, in spite of our attempts to stop it. We discouraged it in every way, because the prospect of over 10 million people coming over was frightening. Any such migration would have involved terrible misery for vast numbers of human beings and would have created almost insoluble problems. It would have upset the whole economy and social set up of India and it would have created difficulties in the way of the nearly 40 million Muslims who are our countrymen in India. In spite of our efforts, people came over. Ultimately, about the middle of 1949, this stream lessened and almost stopped for a while. By then nearly two million non-Muslims had come over from East to West Bengal.

9. During this period, there was no major migration from India to Pakistan. Some Muslims undoubtedly went over. But a very much larger number came back to India, because they found conditions here secure and satisfactory. Hardly any Hindu who came over from Pakistan went back.

10. This was the state of affairs, when sometime last December certain incidents happened in Khulna district in East Bengal which led to an influx of refugees into Calcutta. The stories that these refugees brought led to trouble in Calcutta, and a kind of chain reaction was started. Immediately after, widespread trouble took place in Dacca, Barisal, Bakarganj, Feni, Chittagong and many other places in East Bengal. It was rather extraordinary how this trouble took place more or less at the same time in a number of widely separated areas of East Bengal. There was heavy killing, arson and looting and abduction of women and forcible conversion. Bengal is peculiarly susceptible to any attacks on women and forced conversions. Tension increased greatly and incidents occurred in some parts of the U.P. and Bombay also. Early in March, tribal people in some parts of Assam, incited by some refugees from East Bengal, swept down over the Muslim population of that area and committed widespread arson and drove about 40,000 Muslims across the border into East Pakistan. Since then there has been no major incident either in Pakistan or India. But minor incidents, such as occasional stabbing or arson, have occurred.

11. I do not wish to draw a balance-sheet of evil deeds, as it serves little purpose to do so and the information at our disposal is still far from complete. But my own belief is, from such facts as we possess, that the killing in East Pakistan was far greater. Also that there was no rape or abduction of women or forced conversions in West Bengal. On both sides passions have been roused and there is a sense of insecurity both in East and West Bengal. In East Bengal it may be said with some assurance that hardly a single Hindu wants to remain there. For some time after the disturbances, travel was limited and obstructions were placed in the way of people coming from East to West Bengal. The result of this was to increase panic and a feeling of being in a trap. Much as we dislike big migrations, we felt that

it was essential to open the door to these people coming over and to ask the Pakistan Government to give full protection during travel. This protection was necessary, because some horrible train outrages had occurred, when large numbers of people were killed in railway trains. As soon as train services and steamers were resumed, though on a restricted scale, the migrations started. Over 200,000 Hindus have come over from East Bengal, usually with little or nothing even in the shape of personal belongings. At the same time over 100,000 Muslims have left West Bengal for East. Probably most of these are permanent residents of East Bengal who worked in Calcutta and the neighbourhood. Some of the Muslims left Calcutta for other parts of India, like the U.P. and Bihar. These migrations continue and are limited only by the transport available.

12. I have recently visited Calcutta twice and seen the stream of refugees collecting in camps and other places. I have also seen, at close quarters, the intense emotion and anger of the people in Calcutta. It must be remembered that a very large number of people in East and West Bengal are related to each other and thus any tragic happening has an intimate significance for people on either side. We are trying to do our best for the refugees and to lessen the panic and the anger. We have felt that it is better to allow people to come to West Bengal or to go away from it without let or hindrance, in order to remove a feeling of being shut in, as if in a trap. I do not know how long this migration will continue. We have controlled the situation wherever any trouble has occurred and punished the trouble-makers. We are trying to help Muslims who have suffered. Meanwhile, reports reach us of petty incidents happening and of people travelling from East Pakistan to India being harassed in many ways and deprived of their belongings. Large numbers of Hindus in camps in East Bengal are in great distress because adequate food is not supplied.

13. I made various proposals to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, including one for a joint visit by him and me to both East and West Bengal, also about joint commissions of the Governments of East and West Bengal, inclusive of Ministers, visiting the affected areas. Neither of these proposals was accepted. We then discussed the desirability of issuing some kind of a joint declaration. On the whole we agreed to most of its terms; the most important part of these was free movement of people from one country to another. But such a declaration has not great importance now, because people have lost all faith in declarations and assurances.

14. We have to face today a problem of colossal magnitude and complexity. We can hardly think in terms of vast transfers of population which may last years before they are completed and which would upset completely the economy of both countries. It would be a continuing evil, with refugees spreading all over the country carrying their tales of woe and becoming sources of further infection. At the same time we cannot think of preventing people, who find it impossible to remain in Pakistan, seeking succour from us. The problem has many aspects, but perhaps the most important is the psychological one. That derives, I think, from that

unfortunate conception of an Islamic theocratic State which Pakistan professes.² That in itself prevents minorities in Pakistan from settling down and tension and trouble continue. We cannot spend the rest of our lives in facing this and in meeting year after year huge migrations of people. We cannot also just ignore what happens to our kith and kin on the other side. There can be no peace or equilibrium in India till the fullest protection and opportunity are given to the minorities both in Pakistan and India. We have set ourselves to do that and I think, by and large, we have succeeded, though occasionally we have failed. At any rate our policy is clear. On the Pakistan side, their policy influenced by the idea of a theocratic State, itself tends to push out the non-conformists. As these people come to India, they create difficulties for our Muslim countrymen.

15. My colleagues and I have done our utmost to face this difficult situation and to stand our ground against heavy pressure for some kind of direct action aimed at protecting the non-Muslim minority in East Bengal. How long we can stand that pressure will depend on happenings in East Pakistan. So long as the mentality that led to the creation of Pakistan, namely the hatred of the Hindus and India lasts and expresses itself in violence or in continued pressures on the Hindu minority, so long will there be not only no easing of the tension between the two countries but an ever-present risk of sudden conflict. It is my considered opinion that the fair and just treatment of the minorities in both Pakistan and India is far more important for the maintenance of peace than the settlement of the Kashmir dispute. Unlike Kashmir, this problem of the minorities involves no dispute over territory. And yet, as large numbers go over from one side to another, questions of having additional territory for them are put to us.

16. What we need for a satisfactory solution is to put our conceptions of the State on a right basis and to put an end to distrust and hate. India, as I have repeatedly said, has no designs upon the territorial integrity or the independence of Pakistan. We seek nothing more than to be left free to develop in our own way and to do so in friendship and peace with Pakistan. But Pakistan continues to be influenced by that communal spirit which led to its creation and which influences still its policy even towards its non-Muslim minority. If there is to be real peace between us, this mentality must come to an end.

17. This has become a long letter and I must apologise for having taken up so much of your time. I have written with no desire to blame Pakistan or to throw upon other shoulders the responsibility which, in the last resort, only the two Governments directly concerned must bear. The purpose of this letter is to give you, as objectively as I can, an account of recent happenings and their effect on Indo-Pakistan relations. We are thoroughly alive to the perils that face us and are

2. Attlee in his reply of 29 March agreed about the difficulty caused by theocratic states and wrote that Europe was full of examples. "We have two on our doorstep Eire and Northern Ireland." He emphasised that toleration was the essence of democracy.

anxious to avert them. But success in this extremely difficult task cannot be achieved by our efforts alone.³

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Attlee replied that in the general tense situation some incident might precipitate a serious conflict whose results in the world situation would be incalculable. He expressed concern for India and wrote that Labour's policy towards India had made a very strong appeal to the majority of people in Britain and "we have gained strength to go forward in other parts of the Commonwealth and Empire." But he feared that this policy would be attacked if it went wrong in the subcontinent as the British—being practical people—judged by results.

87. To G.S. Bajpai¹

New Delhi
March 21, 1950

My dear Bajpai,

I have just received your letter. I agree with almost everything that you say in it, and yet I should not like you to resign or retire at the same time as I leave Government. I shall not go into the reasons for this at present. I do not see why you should agree to any basic policy to which you are opposed or otherwise change your ways. If an occasion arises when you have to face such a proposed change of policy, then it would be perfectly right for you to retire.

I remember well what you told me when you agreed to become Secretary-General. I also remember your referring to your health and to the necessity of your resting in the afternoon under doctor's orders. As a matter of fact, you have worked harder and probably put in more hours in the office than anyone else in External Affairs. I have deeply appreciated the work you have done and the manner of doing it, and it has been a pleasure to work with you.

I have not spoken about these matters to anyone barring one or two persons. I have, however, sent brief letters to Vijayalakshmi and to Krishna Menon telling them of probable developments here in the course of the next two or three weeks. I thought they should be warned. I was anxious also that they should not suddenly take any step because of my going out of Government. I have advised them therefore to carry on. There will be time enough to take any other step, if necessity arises, and there can always be consultation about it.

1. J.N. Collection.

You will appreciate that Krishna Menon's position in London might be even more difficult than anyone else, after I go away. Nevertheless I thought that he should not make my retirement as an excuse for resigning.

I can only give you the same advice. I expect that the situation created by my going out of Government would be dynamic. It may take a turn for the better or for the worse. It cannot remain where it is. There may be a period of some kind of instability in Government. All this may happen and at every turn, we may have to decide what we should do. In view of all this, it does seem to me desirable that other people should continue and await developments. To connect my departure with resignation would not be a good thing.

However, we shall speak about this when the time comes.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

88. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
March 22, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

We have been getting daily reports from your Government and other sources about conditions in West and East Bengal. We should like to know as correctly as possible the numbers of people coming into Calcutta and West Bengal from East Pakistan by train, steamer, boat, air and road, as well as those going out to Pakistan.

Your telegram of yesterday mentioned an intrusion of 300 Pakistani Muslims in the border village of Khasipore. We should like to have full particulars of this. Our police and military have standing orders that they should permit no intrusion and they should repulse it by force, if necessary, if this kind of thing occurs.

I have been greatly worried about reports from Calcutta regarding the forcible possession of Muslim houses there. Evidently this is being done on an organised scale by one or more gangs and is in pursuance of a definite policy. So far as I know, quite a number of houses have been occupied in this way. This kind of thing has a very bad effect in many ways and we are put in an embarrassing position to explain it. I am sure you must be taking steps to put an end to this and to punish those gangs or others who are doing it.

Yours,
Jawahar

1. J.N. Collection.

89. To P.C. Ghosh¹

New Delhi
23 March 1950

My dear Prafulla Babu,

...I am greatly disturbed about the deteriorating situation in West Bengal. There is no doubt that some people or some groups are deliberately creating this trouble in order to force our hands. I do not propose to be forced in this way.

Do not believe all the odd rumours that reach you...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

90. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
March 23, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Thank you for your letter of the 22nd March with its enclosures. I am greatly distressed by the communal situation in West Bengal. It seems to me quite clear that some groups are deliberately trying to create trouble in order to force our hands or in order to create a situation which automatically leads to war. I do not propose to be pushed in this way and I am quite convinced that we should avoid falling into this trap.

It appears that more and more Muslim houses are forcibly occupied. Would it serve a useful purpose if you announced that none of these occupations will be recognised and all the new occupants will have to pay heavy penalties. I think this might do some good provided such a notice was acted upon swiftly in regard to a few cases.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

91. To Jayaprakash Narayan¹

New Delhi
March 23, 1950

My dear Jayaprakash,

I have just received your telegram suggesting representative Indians should be invited to forge a national policy with regard to Pakistan and unite to preserve peace and decency in India. I like the idea, but I do not quite know whom you consider representative. Can you make some further suggestions?²

The more I think of it, the more I feel that we should avoid war if we possibly can. The consequences are terrible to contemplate. Some people are trying to push and bully us into war. The Hindu Mahasabha's attitude is clearly to exploit the situation in order somehow to bring about what they call Akhand Hindustan. They will never do so of course, but their statements to this effect are revealing. They are not out to settle this question, but just to have war in the hope of conquering Pakistan. Because of public feeling, many people fall into this trap.

While we must accept those refugees who come to us and look after them, I feel that the only way to solve this problem is to produce conditions of security for minorities where they are. As things are at present, declarations by Government to this effect do not go very far. We have made declarations. We might make a comprehensive approach to the problem. But ultimately, it seems to me that possibly some international agency might be asked to see that these declarations are carried out in practice. This agency may be the Red Cross or some other.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Jayaprakash Narayan urged the calling of a conference of representative Indians to evolve a common policy of action for solving the minorities problem. "India is in great peril and there must be unity and joint effort and no exploitation of the difficulties for party purposes." In a national crisis such as war his party was prepared to join the Government.

92. The Situation in Bengal¹

At the Cabinet meeting this afternoon, it was felt that we should wait for Mr Liaquat Ali Khan's statement after his return from East Pakistan and then discuss the Bengal

1. Note to Cabinet, 23 March 1950. J.N. Collection.

matter further. Mr Liaquat Ali Khan has returned to Karachi and he may make some kind of a statement soon. In any event, we should clear our own mind and have some constructive approach to the problem. At the present moment we are almost at a dead end, so far as constructive thinking in regard to this matter is concerned.

2. There is a great deal of talk about firm action and many people accuse us of not knowing our own minds. This may partly be true. But those who accuse us generally seem to think that a test of knowing our minds is for us to decide on what is called "firm action", that is war. Hardly any other positive proposal is made. There has been some talk of organised exchange of populations.²

3. So far as war is concerned, I am more convinced than ever that it would have disastrous consequences for us. I shall not go into this argument here. But it seems to me clear that any such war would either end fairly soon because of international intervention of some kind, or will go on for a lengthy period, running into years. We would be completely isolated in the world, chiefly because we will be considered to have taken the initiative in it. There is a horror of war everywhere and a fear of world war. Any country that enters into a relatively big war brings the possibility of world war nearer. Therefore, people in other countries are particularly frightened at this prospect. In Asia especially, all kinds of forces are at play and any upset in the present balance would lead to far-reaching consequences. There may well be social upheavals in India of some magnitude. These may not occur right at the beginning, but as the war progresses, undoubtedly both in Pakistan and India, we shall have this trouble.

4. Apart from this, it is not at all clear to me what we can gain by a war, even successful war. All experience goes to show that there is no gain and the loss is very great. Therefore we should avoid war, unless it is forced upon us.

5. At the same time it is desirable for us not only to be prepared for war fully, because anything might happen, but to make it clear that we are prepared for it. The threat of war brings some advantages and some pressure and sanctions.

6. Some groups in India are thinking in terms of war because they are emotionally excited and want that something decisive might be done. Other groups want war, not for the sake of protecting minorities or any like object, but definitely for their own political objective. They are thus exploiting the present situation to gain their objective. The Hindu Mahasabha has declared itself in favour of Akhand Hindustan. I am quite convinced that even successful war will not lead to this, because many other things will happen. The Hindu Mahasabha's attitude is perfectly

2. Some Hindu Mahasabha leaders had been demanding that either the partition of Bengal be undone or that Pakistan should cede some territory to India in order to effect a complete transfer of minorities (10 million people) so that these people could be rehabilitated.

clear. I quote from a responsible authority of the Mahasabha:

“Under pressure of circumstances, the Congress Ministry is being driven to a course of action which might result in the re-establishment of Akhand Hindustan, contrary to their professed policy. In the event of such a war— which I feel, is imminent—the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha has to be clearly defined. The war will lead to the consummation of the very objective for which we are striving and which had been one of the fundamental issues on which we have differed from the Congress.”

7. This quotation is significant. It shows what the real objectives of the members of the Hindu Mahasabha and those who think like them are.

8. We have also to be clear in our minds in regard to communalism in general. It has been our professed policy to combat communalism and even Parliament has declared itself in favour of this policy. Are we abiding by that policy or changing it? Lack of clarity in regard to this matter leads to confused and contradictory action. I am quite clear in my mind that we have to follow our old policy regardless of developments, because any other policy leads to ruin and disaster.

9. If war is to be avoided, what is the other constructive approach to the problem. I do not think a deliberate planned exchange of population is feasible or desirable. A large enough exchange is in fact taking place now. It is more than we can manage. We cannot stop it in present circumstances and we do not wish to stop it. At the same time we cannot just go on, without doing anything else, having this business of exchange continuing for months and years.

10. Any constructive approach, apart from war, must necessarily mean some kind of agreement with Pakistan. The fact that Pakistan does not honour its agreement may be true. But there is no other way of dealing with a country. What we have to think of is how to create some machinery which might prevent obvious breaches of an agreement. There will always be a possible threat of war in case of a major breach. Apart from this, the only other sanction or machinery that we can have is some international machinery. That international machinery should not be given any right to make a decision. It should only help in seeing that decisions or agreements made between India and Pakistan are carried out.

11. Two points for this to be considered: (1) what should be the nature of the agreement between India and Pakistan? (2) What should be the machinery to see that this agreement is carried out?

12. The nature of the agreement might be:

(1) Full protection of minorities and full opportunities of growth and participation in national activity. This would lead to opening out responsible office and positions of authority to representatives of minorities.

(2) Punishment of evil-doers and compensation to those who suffer, punitive fines, etc.

- (3) No encouragement of migration, but open door for people to travel from one country to the other under adequate protection and no harassment.
- (4) Evacuee properties to be dealt with adequately.

13. This is just some slight indication. Other matters might be added. It is important that the question of property should be brought in. The agreement should relate to East Pakistan, Bengal and Assam. Such an agreement if it includes evacuee property would have its effect in Western Pakistan also in regard to evacuee property, but we need not include it.

14. The West Bengal Government is acting energetically. Nevertheless the situation in West Bengal has deteriorated to some extent. In Calcutta large numbers of Muslim houses are being forcibly occupied. In Bankura and other places trouble had occurred on a considerable scale. Odd incidents may be due to individuals. But there is little doubt that organised groups are behind this business. I think that we should make it clear that any person forcibly occupying a house will be liable to heavy penalty. This declaration should be acted on immediately in the case of a few.

16. This is just a brief note for Cabinet to give an indication of a possible approach.

17. I have received a telegram from Shri Jayaprakash Narayan suggesting that a conference of representative Indians should be held to forge common national policy with regard to Pakistan and to unite to preserve peace and decency in India. I think it would be desirable to hold some conference, but I am not clear in my mind as to who should be invited to it.

93. To Nellie Sen Gupta¹

New Delhi

March 24, 1950

My dear Nellie,

Your letter of the 21st March has reached me.² Thank you for it. It gives me some

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Nellie Sen Gupta had reported the killings, arson, and loot in East Bengal. She also wrote that those Hindus having some idea of staying on were facing a serious economic situation. She wrote that despite the declaration in *The Statesman* that no permits were required for Hindus to leave Pakistan and its corroboration by the authorities, the Custom Office was not allowing them to go out on the plea that they had received no such order from the Central Government.

idea of conditions at your end. I need hardly tell you that we have been greatly exercised over all these happenings and we are doing our utmost to help in such ways as we can. You have passed through terrible times and to some extent we have shared your sorrow and burden. All I can say is that we must keep good heart and not allow ourselves to become panicky.

We are trying in various ways to help people. If there is any specific way that you can suggest for us to help, please let us know. Or you can let Santosh Babu³ know about it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Santosh Kumar Basu, Deputy High Commissioner of India at Dhaka.

94. Harassment of Evacuees¹

You will see from the letter attached that complaints are made about the harassment of Muslims leaving Assam for East Bengal. There are the customs restrictions. People are not allowed to take money above a certain sum and apparently there is some restriction on taking ornaments and clothing. A reference to goondas etc., is also made.

These are identical objections which we raised on our part in regard to the Hindu refugees coming from East Bengal. I do not know what the facts are, but we can hardly do something in our own territory to which we take objection in Pakistan. I think an enquiry might be addressed to the Assam Government on this subject.

1. Note to Additional Foreign Secretary, 24 March 1950. File No. 3(15)-BL/50, M.E.A.

95. Telegram to B.C. Roy¹

Have just learnt of murder of Cameron,² President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and his Muslim driver. I have been deeply shocked by this occurrence

1. New Delhi, 26 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. A.L. Cameron of Andrew Yule, one of the leaders of the British business community in Calcutta and President of the Bengal and Associated Chambers of Commerce, was killed on 26 March at Bandel while attempting to protect his Muslim bearer from a Hindu mob. His driver who was also injured died later.

as symbolising growth of murder and disorder in Calcutta. For some days past situation has been deteriorating. It is clear that it cannot be allowed to do so, if any Government is to continue. Strongest possible action should be taken to punish all those who offend against the law. Mere statements threatening stern action no longer enough. Leaders of groups organising aggressive action, looting and atrocities must be apprehended and proceeded against. Collective fines should be imposed. All public officials should be told that this order has to be put an end to at all costs and Muslim and other lives protected. It is shameful for us to have to put up with continuous open defiance of law and continuance of murder and loot. Newspapermen should also be told clearly what the consequences of this are going to be. Our reputation in the world is going to pieces.

Please convey my deep sorrow and condolence to Cameron's family.

96. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
26 March 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I am writing to you after a great deal of thought, as I feel that I owe it to you and to myself to do so. We have been close friends and colleagues, in spite of differences of opinion, for thirty years or so, and we have passed through numerous crises together. I suppose we have got to know each other fairly well because of this long companionship and working together in all kinds of weather, fair and foul. We have a good deal of affection and respect for each other and this has helped us a great deal in the past to face problems together.

You will remember that some months ago before Gandhiji's death, certain differences of opinion between us were repeatedly discussed before Bapu. In fact this went on almost to the day of his death. At that time we were faced by a difficult problem. Temperamental differences and differences in viewpoints and approach to certain problems made it a little difficult occasionally for us to pull together. Therefore the question arose whether it was desirable from the public point of view for those differences of approach to lead to certain consequences which were not good. On the other hand, it was manifest that conditions, as they were in India, demanded that we should pull together and subordinate, to some extent, our personal viewpoints in the interests of the larger good. The problem was a difficult one for us and we took Bapu's advice separately and jointly. Bapu was of opinion for

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 9-14.

some time that perhaps it was the right course for one of us to retire from Government, leaving the other a free hand. I offered to do so, and so did you. Neither of us of course wanted any office or wished any personal equation to affect either our personal relations or public policy. Nevertheless, after repeated discussion we felt, and Bapu appeared to be of this opinion just before his death, that, taking it all in all, it was our duty to pull together. We have tried to do so to the best of our ability for these past two years and more. Difficulties have often arisen, but both of us have this overriding sense that we could not endanger the larger interests of the country by imperilling this joint working.²

Lately, however, new developments have taken place which have made me doubt seriously whether this attempt at joint working serves a useful purpose or whether it merely hinders the proper functioning of Government. Your remarks at a Cabinet meeting some days ago hurt me.³ But apart from the personal reaction, I was made to think, even more than before, that our approaches to certain vital problems were very different. A day or two later I made a statement, at the next meeting of the Cabinet, which you will remember. I made no personal reference then but I stated that I was deeply troubled in my mind and felt that the ideals we had stood for a generation or more were fading away and no longer guided our policy. It was true that circumstances had changed and new problems had arisen which could not easily be dealt with by our old methods. Nevertheless, an ideal or objective or a basic policy could not be made the plaything of circumstances, however immediate policies might vary.

That statement of mine was not due to a reaction to any particular event but rather to an accumulation of many things that had happened previously.

At that time I did not know that you had invited a large number of members of Parliament and spoken to them about various matters. I heard about this later from some of those present and I confess that I was deeply perturbed by what I heard.⁴ I was told that you expressed your strong disapproval about many of our

2. Replying on 28 March 1950, Patel recalled his last conversation with Gandhiji when "he expressed his considered opinion that both you and I should continue to collaborate in the service of the country since the consequences of any separation would be disastrous to its interests. I have striven to my utmost to execute these last words of Bapu." He was grieved to learn that "I have been found by you wanting in the execution of Bapu's last message... It appears that some persons have again found in the present troubled atmosphere and your own troubled state of mind an easy opportunity of creating an atmosphere of doubts, misgivings and conflict."
3. Patel stated that it was decided that after Nehru's return from Calcutta, the matter was to be discussed in the Cabinet and then a statement made in the Assembly whereas Nehru, after his return, made the statement and later called the Cabinet meeting. He was sorry that this hurt Nehru but the reactions all over India to his statement proved that what Patel felt was not without substance.
4. Nehru was told of a meeting to which Patel had invited some M.P.s and spoken about various matters and had allegedly criticised the Government policy regarding Bengal and foreign affairs.

policies for which I was responsible and you disclaimed any responsibility. This referred generally to the Bengal situation⁵ and what I had said about it, and also to our foreign policy. Other matters were mentioned to me also, but I need not go into them.

For you to refer to all these important matters in the way you were reported to have done, before a large number of members of Parliament, seemed to me very unfortunate and very extraordinary. It was clear that you did so under stress of strong opinions and feelings. The personal aspect of it might be ignored, but the public aspect became important, and indeed a number of members who were present in our house were disturbed by this wider aspect of the problem. The lobbies were full of talk.

A day or two later, a meeting of the party took place where reference was made by several members to whispering campaigns. No names were mentioned but it was clear what was hinted at. I heard also that Government officials were themselves taking part in this whispering business and had encouraged the writing of editorials in newspapers criticising me or what I had said.

This was an extraordinary state of affairs and I felt that I could hardly continue as Prime Minister if this kind of thing was taking place. Hence the feeling I showed in my speech to the party.

I have narrated some of these past events just to give the background of my own thought. We are facing today a crisis of the deepest magnitude and vital decisions have to be taken from time to time. Those decisions may be right or wrong, but they must be clear. If there is no clear objective or approach guiding them, they will tend to be confusing and contradictory. Hence it has become necessary that we should be perfectly clear about our official aims and policies. Naturally, existing circumstances and the succession of events force our hands. But even so, we cannot ignore any basic policy that we may pursue.

The whole Bengal problem and the Indo-Pakistan issue have many facets—political, economic, communal, national and international. Of these, the communal aspect has great importance. Indeed the whole problem is in the nature of a communal problem. We have long stood for discouraging and putting an end to communalism. That has been the Congress policy and it has been repeated and affirmed by Parliament. We talk of a secular state. That of course simply means any normal state today, leaving out the abnormality of Pakistan's Islamic state. We adopted our policy regardless of what the Muslim League or Pakistan might say or do, because we thought that was the only policy, both from the idealistic and the practical and opportunist points of view. Any other policy could only lead

5. Patel replied that after discussing one or two matters with the M.P.s, he was asked of his views on Bengal. He explained why precipitate action could not be taken. India had to be prepared for all eventualities. The members asked whether they would be able to express their strong feelings on the subject to Nehru. Patel told them the time was not ripe for such a meeting.

to disruption and disaster. Certain organisation, notably the Hindu Mahasabha, adopted an exactly contrary policy, that is contrary to ours, though exactly similar, in reverse, to Pakistan's. I find that progressively we are being driven to adopt what is essentially the Pakistan or the Hindu Mahasabha policy in this respect. It may be that the circumstances were too strong for us. I do not think any circumstance can be strong enough to upset a long-term policy which we consider essential. I am quite convinced that that old policy of ours was the only right one and is the only right one in present circumstances. That was the Gandhian approach to the communal problem. It meant an attempt not only to protect the minorities but to win them over and thus demonstrate the rightness of our policy. If we do not adhere to that policy, then inevitably other consequences follow. It is no good at all for us to follow two contradictory policies at one and the same time. That is the worst way out of a difficulty.

The position today is that while Pakistan has followed and is following an intensely communal policy, we are tending to do the same and thus completely playing into the hands of Pakistan. Hindus in Pakistan are terrified and want to come away. There is no doubt that Muslims in India are also full of fear. There is hardly a Muslim in West Bengal or even in Delhi and many other places in India who has a sense of safety. Certainly they have no sense of future well-being and progress. That is no doubt partly due to circumstances beyond our control. But partly also it is due to our own wavering policy and to the thought in the minds of many of us that Muslims are aliens in India, not to be trusted, and to be got rid of as soon and as tactfully as possible.

In West Bengal conditions have become very bad. The murder of Cameron, presumably while defending his Muslim chauffeur, is of high significance, not because he was a prominent Englishman but because it shows up the state of Calcutta today. How can we blame Pakistan for the misdeeds of any individuals or groups in Pakistan when we are totally unable to give security to our own people? There is little doubt that our reputation, whatever it was, is going to pieces and even our *bona fides* are challenged.

I think we have taken up far too lenient an attitude towards those in India who encourage this communal feeling of hatred and violence. The Hindu Mahasabha talks about Akhand Bharat, which is a direct incentive to conflict. War is openly talked about. As a Government we seem to be fading out of the picture and people publicly say that our Government has contradictory policies and, as a result, no policy at all. The belief that retaliation is a suitable method to deal with Pakistan, or what happens in Pakistan, is growing. That is the surest way to ruin for India and Pakistan and for vast numbers of human beings in these two countries. That surely is not a way to protect minorities.

Whatever Pakistan may do, we have a certain responsibility for Indian nationals, whether they are Hindu or Muslim. We are progressively unable to discharge that responsibility.

The question of foreign policy also comes up and has to be cleared. So also many other matters.

In these circumstances, the fact that you and I pull in different directions, and in any event the belief that we do so, is exceedingly harmful. Our Governmental machinery is suffering because of this and senior Government officers have the temerity to criticise Ministers of Government in private and even to some extent in semi-public. It is clear that such a situation must be ended as rapidly as possible.

The matter is far too important for a decision by individuals. It involves national policy. The party of course must have a say in the matter. But ultimately it is for the Congress organisation to decide, whether it is the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. The Working Committee is meeting soon. Personally I think the matter is important enough for the A.I.C.C. to have an emergency meeting. I wish we could have a full session of the Congress, but that is not possible for some months. A clear line must be laid down and followed rigorously and loyally.

There should be no doubt in the minds of the people and the party and Government officials what our policy is and how it should be carried out. Any weakness in it on the part of a Government official will have to be sternly met.

I have referred to these larger questions of policy which can be ignored no longer. I remember when the A.I.C.C. met soon after the Punjab disturbances and Gandhiji was present and guided our deliberations. Personally I feel that that line was correct then and is basically correct now.

The personal equation, as between you and me, has of course importance for both of us and for the country. But I think we should consider this matter primarily, apart from the personal equation. After the decision on principle is taken, other questions can be decided with greater ease. In any event, the present disorderly state of our minds and work should be ended as soon as possible.⁶

Yours,
Jawaharlal

6. Hurt by some of the statements in this letter, Patel in his eight-page reply protested his loyalty: "I have no desire to continue if I cannot fulfil the mission entrusted to me by Bapu in his last moments and strengthen your hands, or if you entertain any suspicions about my loyalty to you, or if you think I am an obstacle in the implementation of your policies."

97. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

In your telegram No. 1302 dated 14th March you said that you would write to me on your return to Karachi from East Bengal. I have not heard from you so far.

I need not tell you of the urgency of the East Bengal problem. You have been there and must now have a personal appreciation of the gravity of the situation. Refugees from there continue to pour in; during the last three days the number have averaged fifteen thousand daily. Nearly half a million have come over since the recent trouble started, and there are no signs of the flood stopping. That is evidence of the persistence of a sense of insecurity among non-Muslims there. Apart from the misery that refugees suffer from this uprooting from their ancestral homes and all that that involves the economic burden and the psychological strain upon our people both Hindu and Muslim have become intolerable.

A flow of Muslim refugees in the opposite direction, though smaller in volume, is also in progress. That must create a similar economic and psychological problem for you.

This process cannot go on without disastrous consequences to both our countries and we have to make all out efforts to solve it.

I think that quickest and most effective way to attempt a solution is for us to meet. Correspondence is a poor substitution for personal discussions. The urgency and gravity of the task will not brook the unavoidable delays that correspondence involves.

I would therefore urge you to come to Delhi at the earliest possible convenient date. So far as we are concerned we are prepared to meet you here and any colleagues that you may wish to bring on any date and to put aside every other engagement. As I pointed out in my telegram No.9GS from Calcutta dated 16th March the stage for a mere declaration on the lines that we have been discussing is past. Practically everything that was to be included in that statement has already been said by both of us publicly. It is imperative that we go to the very root of the problem and devise solutions which will put an end to the present situation that threatens catastrophes.

1. New Delhi, 26 March 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

98. To K.C Neogy¹

New Delhi

March 26, 1950

My dear Neogy,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th March.

It often happens that a relatively small matter is discussed for long and a far more important matter does not take up so much time. That does not lessen the latter's importance. It only means that the room for discussion at the moment is limited. I think I can say with perfect truth that every single problem before us, whatever it might be, has been given a secondary place, because of the Bengal problem. Certainly in my mind other things hardly count at present. It is the very difficulty of the problem and its colossal nature that prevents detailed consideration of minor aspects of it. The refugee aspect is highly important. But the more basic aspects deal with our relations with Pakistan. There is frequent reference to strong action. But it is not quite clear what strong action signifies and how such strong action yields the results we hope for. The extract you have sent me from the *Hindusthan Standard* was pointed out to me by Suresh Mazumdar.² It is a very painful one.

Our justification for "strong action" is progressively becoming less and less because of happenings in Calcutta and West Bengal. Conditions in Calcutta are very bad and not a day passes without murder and looting. Today's news is particularly bad. Cameron, President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, was going to Chinsura in his car driven by a Muslim driver. A Hindu mob, intent on attacking a train and killing Muslim passengers in it, attacked this car. Probably Cameron tried to protect his chauffeur. Anyhow both Cameron and his Muslim driver were killed. Our reputation is sinking fast.

This afternoon, after consulting some of our colleagues and the President, I sent a telegram to Liaquat Ali Khan, inviting him to come to Delhi as soon as possible to discuss a solution of the basic problems that confront us. You will no doubt have got a copy of this telegram.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Suresh Chandra Mazumdar (1888-1954); arrested during the freedom struggle; one of the founders of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*; started the *Hindusthan Standard*, President, North Calcutta Congress Committee, 1927-37; President, Calcutta Printers' Association, 1937-52; Secretary, Rabindra Memorial Committee, 1945; elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946; member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-1954.

THE INDO-PAKISTAN AGREEMENT

II. The Pact

1. Cable to Liaquat Ali Khan¹

Thank you for your letter of 26th March which I have received today.² I am glad to find that you agree with me that we should meet to discuss these urgent and important matters in order to find a solution. I would have gladly come to Karachi,³ but it would suit us much better if the venue of our meeting was Delhi. In view of the importance of subjects to be discussed I should like some of my colleagues to be present or available for consultation. Unfortunately, reasons of health make it difficult for them to travel, more especially by air. I shall be grateful therefore if you could come to Delhi with such colleagues as you consider necessary as our guests.

1. New Delhi, 27 March 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Replying to Nehru's letters of 10 and 13 March, Liaquat Ali wrote that his extensive tour of East Bengal had convinced him that the trouble there was the reaction of attacks on Muslims in West Bengal but it had been suppressed rigorously and speedily. A steadily increasing stream of refugees had come from West Bengal, Assam and elsewhere with stories of continuing communal violence, irresponsible behaviour of the press, threat of Indian invasion of Pakistan and concentration of Indian troops and military stores on the western frontiers.
3. He had invited Nehru to Karachi to discuss the whole question of relations between India and Pakistan.

2. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Your telegrams 3536 and 3537 dated 27th March. We would like you to convey to Mr Attlee our appreciation of his suggestion.² Lord Addison is an old and trusted friend and would always be welcome here. I am only anxious that considering

1. New Delhi, 28 March 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Attlee had enquired from both Krishna Menon and the Pakistan High Commissioner in London, whether an elder British statesman, say Lord Addison, could be usefully present in India and Pakistan at this juncture to be available for any assistance required. It was made clear that Britain was not offering mediation but only good offices.

his age and state of health, how far we would be justified in asking him to come to India, when the weather is becoming hot. If situation demands this, I shall not hesitate to request him to visit us. Meanwhile, Liaquat Ali has accepted my invitation to come to Delhi³ and he and his colleagues are meeting us here on 2nd April.⁴ After that perhaps situation will be clearer. I shall let you know.

PERSONAL

Addison is of course welcome but there is one consideration. Feelings here are rather excited and touchy and many people accuse U.K. of working against us. I would dislike putting Addison in embarrassing position. However, we shall consider this further⁵ and I should like to know from you if possible what Pakistan replies to Addison's visit proposal.

3. Attlee was deeply impressed by the fact that the invitation to Liaquat Ali had no conditions attached to it.
4. On 29 March 1950, Liaquat Ali announced in Karachi that he was visiting Delhi on 2 April.
5. Krishna Menon thought that declining this suggestion would not be to "our advantage or credit."

3. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
29 March, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Thank you for your letter of 28th March. I am writing to you briefly as I hope to have a talk with you soon, perhaps more than one talk. Indeed it was my intention all along to have this talk. But I wanted some leisure moment and neither you nor I could easily find it. I wrote to you² rather on the spur of the moment one night because I felt that I ought to put before you some thoughts in my mind. That would perhaps help in a future discussion.

You have written to me at length and have taken a lot of trouble over it. It was not necessary for you to explain petty incidents, nor is it my habit to listen to gossip or stories. I mentioned the report of the meeting you had at your house because it became common talk among members of Parliament and was actually referred to indirectly but nevertheless pointedly at the party meeting. There was nothing that you were reported to have said, even if that had been correct, that had great importance. I know that things are torn out of their context. I was quite

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 22-23.
2. See *ante*, pp. 146-150.

sure then, as I am now, that you would not say anything deliberately to others that you would not say to me. I know very well how much pains you have taken in the past to accommodate me and I am grateful to you for it.

What has been troubling me is something more basic and fundamental. It has two aspects. One is rather personal and the other completely impersonal. The personal aspect is that in spite of our affection and respect for each other, we do things differently and therefore tend to pull differently in regard to many matters. That is bad, for it affects not only policies but the administration. You and I get on much better together than most people imagine and anyway we understand each other. Nevertheless, that pull in different directions is not good and produces confusion.

The second impersonal aspect is the drift in the country, whether it is governmental, Congress or other. As I said in the Cabinet one day, I see every ideal that I have held fading away and conditions emerging in India which not only distress me but indicate to me that my life's work has been a failure. I am not a person, I hope, who runs away from a difficulty. But the problem before me is how best I can fight for the ideals I hold dear and which I consider, from the strictly practical point of view, important and essential for India. I believe firmly that if we move away from those basic ideals for which the Congress stood and for which Gandhiji stood (I am not referring to minor details), then India goes rapidly to disaster and ruin. Ultimately, real disaster only comes from within and not from outside. It is this inner rot that is the most distressing symptom of today.

I hope we shall have a chance of having full and frank talks soon.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

4. The Situation in East and West Bengal¹

JN: Sir, as the House knows, I have been for some time past in correspondence with the Prime Minister of Pakistan in regard to recent happenings in East and West Bengal. In view of the grave developments that have taken place, I felt that

1. Statement in Parliament, 29 March 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, (Official Report)*, Vol. III, Part II, 1st March-31st March 1950, pp. 2241-2242.

correspondence, by telegram or letter, was not an adequate or satisfactory method of dealing with this problem. I invited Mr Liaquat Ali Khan therefore to come to Delhi, with such colleagues as he might consider necessary to discuss these matters, not only with a view to meeting the present crisis, but also to find an enduring solution of the problems that face us. Soon after I had sent him my invitation, I received an invitation from him to go to Karachi for the same purpose. Our invitations crossed each other. On my further pressing him to come to Delhi, he was good enough to agree and we shall expect him and his colleagues here on April 2nd.

I have also to inform the House that the situation in the Howrah area² and in some other parts of West Bengal became serious and, day before yesterday, the West Bengal Government asked the military to take charge, from the law and order point of view, of the Howrah area. Rather inaccurately, this has been described as the promulgation of martial law. No such actual promulgation has taken place and therefore technically there is no martial law. But we have given the largest powers to the military and they are more or less in control of the Howrah area. We have assured the West Bengal Government of our fullest support in any action they may take to deal with the situation in any part of the State. If necessity arises, martial law will be proclaimed. We are determined to meet this menace with the full resources of the State and to punish all evil-doers as well as those who incite others to evil deeds.

These new arrangements in Howrah³ and elsewhere have resulted in an immediate improvement of the situation. The Howrah area has been quiet and in the rest of Calcutta also there has been practically no incident. The jute mill area is also quiet. There has been an improvement also in other parts of West Bengal.

As the House knows, the country has been shocked and pained by events that took place in East Bengal. Recent happenings in West Bengal, and more particularly in Calcutta and Howrah areas, have been a matter of the deepest shame and sorrow for us. It is the responsibility of our Governments, Central and State, as well as of our people, to preserve law and order and to give full security to every individual. More especially it is our duty and responsibility to give that full sense of security to the minorities who dwell in this country. Every failure to give it is a failure

2. Stray killings of Muslim jute mill workers in Howrah had started on 24 March 1950. The local police neglected the precaution of arresting known bad characters who had made the most of civil disorder. The killings increased on 25 and 26 March, until suddenly on 27 March there was carnage all across Howrah city.
3. Howrah was put under the exclusive charge of an Additional District Magistrate with the army in aid of civil power. Small pickets were set up in the streets and lanes at rifle-shot intervals with orders to shoot anyone who violated the curfew. With the help of the brigade at Fort William communal riots were quelled and not a single Muslim lost his life in Howrah after 30 March.

of Government to that extent and no excuse is sufficient to justify it. A distinguished Englishman, Mr Cameron, President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, met his death at the hands of a mob, in trying to protect his servant. Many citizens and nationals of our country have also met their death at the hands of evil-doers and others who have been led away by passion and prejudice into committing deeds which cannot possibly be excused. I should like to express our Government's deep sorrow for these unhappy and deplorable occurrences which bring discredit upon us.

The fact that an excited and impassioned crowd misbehaves is bad enough, but it is far worse for some people, by speech or writing or otherwise, to excite and inflame the multitude and thus induce them to commit evil deeds. The responsibility of these people is very great, far greater often than that of the crowd or the individual who actually commits the deed. I should like everyone to realise this, and to realise even more how the whole future of our country and our people is being injured by the madness or fanaticism of a few. There has been far too much wild talk and wild writing without thought given to what all this means and what the consequences might be. Our country will progress or will perish because of what we do ourselves, not because of what others may or may not do.

No Government, worthy of its name, can tolerate public disorder and incitement to disorder which we have seen recently. The Government, of which I have the honour to be Prime Minister, is determined not to tolerate this, and I am sure that this House and the country will give their full support and cooperation to the Government in this task.

5. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi

March 29, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

I have just made a brief statement in the House here which you will no doubt see.

We are considering the points for discussion with Liaquat Ali Khan. I shall send you probably tomorrow some indication of these points. Apart from the usual questions we intend dealing with the question of property rather fully. If it is clear that no profit can be made out of evacuee property, then the major incentive for pushing out people will go. Of course, whatever we decide will be equally applicable to both sides. Then there is the question of implementation which has to be looked into.

There is no doubt that there is some slight panic in the minds of English people in Calcutta. This was so even before Cameron's murder. After that, no doubt, it

1. J.N. Collection.

has increased. I must say that the tone and content of some of the newspapers in Calcutta are deplorable. For the moment I am not referring to news or comments on East Bengal, which are bad enough, but rather to the general way of dealing with these and like questions. I do not read many newspapers from Calcutta and I do not see Bengali press at all, though I am told it is worse than the English. The papers I sometimes see are the *Amrita Bazar*, the *Hindusthan Standard* and *The Nation*. *The Nation* carries on outrageously. The *Amrita Bazar* has been equally bad in its tone. There is absolutely no restraint in writing, not even the normal decencies of journalism. The article about Liaquat Ali Khan was in extremely bad taste.² The very things we protest against in Pakistan are brought up against us here and we have no adequate reply to give.

I feel that strong action is necessary against individuals and newspapers wherever such vile talk is indulged in.³

As I have told you on the telephone, it is entirely for your Government and for your Governor to judge of what action should be taken in West Bengal. If, having regard to all the circumstances, you feel that a promulgation of martial law is necessary, we shall certainly authorise it. Meanwhile without such promulgation, the military should be given a fairly free hand and, what is more, the people should realise that they have this free hand.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

2. In an editorial on 29 March 1950, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* compared the forthcoming Nehru-Liaquat Ali meeting to the meetings between Neville Chamberlain and Hitler preceding the Second World War. "We consider it to be engaged in purposeless palaver with his cunning and unscrupulous Pakistani opposite number at a time when our primary duty is to save as many precious lives as is yet possible by our own unilateral action," the *Patrika* remarked.
3. Roy had written on 27 March that he had issued instructions to all newspapers to "only publish such reports as are permitted by the Government regarding incidents in West Bengal." He also wrote about the Security Bill of West Bengal which awaited the President's sanction to enable precensorship on the press.

6. To Kailas Nath Katju¹

New Delhi
March 29, 1950

My dear Kailas Nath,²

Thank you for your letter which I received last evening. There is naturally a tendency

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Governor of West Bengal at this time.

here not to promulgate martial law formally unless there is absolute need for it, as it is the last weapon we have. But ultimately it is only you and the Bengal Government that can decide on the need for it. If you are convinced that it should be done, we shall certainly authorise it without delay. Bidhan Roy told me last night on the telephone that he was watching the situation and if he felt that a promulgation of martial law was necessary, he would immediately let us know. So, the matter rests in your and his hands.

Dr Roy gave some instructions in writing to the military³ in which he said that he was doing so with my approval. That is all right. But I am rather doubtful about the legal aspect. I trust that you will keep in close touch with this aspect and that in general might also be kept in touch. This is to avoid trouble at the High Court in future.

I think it is important that mischief-makers, whether in the press or platform or elsewhere, should be severely dealt with.

I enclose a copy of a letter I am sending to B.C. Roy.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

3. B.C. Roy had telegraphed to Nehru on 27 March that he had handed over the Howrah town to the military and asked them to administer under martial law. "We shall certainly impose collective fines in the affected areas....Ghastly outrages of the last few days will remain as eternal blot upon West Bengal and its people."

7. To S. Radhakrishnan¹

New Delhi
March 29, 1950

My dear Radhakrishnan,

I have today received your letter of the 21st March.

First of all, let me clear up what Dr Keskar² is reported to have said. I do not think he meant that our policy was some temporary policy. There is no question of our changing it basically.

The Bengal situation is becoming terribly difficult and assuming gigantic proportions. While it is true that the basic policy of Pakistan is such that minorities cannot flourish there and are squeezed out and our policy is different, the fact remains that one reacts on the other and produces identical conditions. There is no doubt that today no Hindu in East Pakistan has any sense of security. He is full of fear and wants to get away. At the same time there is little doubt that Muslims

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. B.V. Keskar was Minister of State for External Affairs at this time.

in West Bengal and the greater part of Assam are equally full of fear and are moving away in large numbers. I should imagine that about half a million Hindus have come over from East Pakistan and nearly 400,000 Muslims have gone from Assam and West Bengal to East Bengal. The migrations continue. During the last ten days conditions in West Bengal and especially in Calcutta became very bad and there has been large-scale killing of Muslims. Two days ago, something almost in the nature of martial law was proclaimed in the Howrah area. Conditions are quieter now. It is amazing to what barbarous and sub-human level all of us sink when our passions are roused. Each side gives publicity to its own version and ignores the other. The Pakistan papers are full of stories of atrocities on Muslims in India and ignore what has happened to the Hindus in Pakistan. Similarly Indian newspapers give publicity to the sufferings of the Hindus and hardly refer to what has happened to Muslims in India. A feeling of disgust with all this kind of thing rises up in one.

There has been a good deal of talk of war and the like. Most people who talk about it have no idea what it means and the terrible consequences of it. I hope that things will not come to that pass. I have invited Liaquat Ali Khan here and he is coming on April 2nd....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
March 29, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

From all accounts from Calcutta, the local police has completely broken down. It is not merely a question of being tired out, but of behaving badly and actually taking part in the disturbances. It is the emergency police that has done well. Normally what has happened is that when an incident occurs, murder and arson go on with the local police looking on. Then the emergency police comes and adopts a firm line. But by that time most of the bad work has been done and the miscreants have gone away.

The administration in Calcutta is also rather shaken up. Practically the whole burden falls on Bidhan Roy. Few of the other Ministers are sharing that burden to any extent. I was thinking that it might be a good thing if H.V.R. Iengar was

1. J.N. Collection.

sent to Calcutta for three or four days or a little more, if necessary. He might be able to tone up things there administratively. I spoke to Dr Roy about this on the telephone today and he rather liked the idea. He told me that the district police had behaved very badly indeed.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

9. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Your telegrams 3564 and 3565 of 29th March.² Have carefully considered your suggestions. We feel that Addison's coming here while talks with Liaquat Ali in progress will be undesirable and may even come in the way of frank exchange of views as there will then be tendency to address third party. Afterwards much depends on result of talks. That will be suitable time to decide about Addison's coming.

1. New Delhi, 30 March 1950. File No.57/109/50-Pol. M.H.A.
2. Krishna Menon had written that Gordon Walker told him that Pakistan would welcome Addison's visit who was most willing to fly any time. He also enquired if Nehru would consider inviting Addison. Krishna Menon treated this not as mediation but good offices and advised Nehru not to decline a goodwill offer.

10. To B. Shiva Rao¹

New Delhi
March 30, 1950

My dear Shiva Rao,

Thank you for your letter of the 30th March.

I am sorry that the meeting of your Standing Committee has been postponed. I thought it was a very good idea that you should hold this meeting in Calcutta. I do not know what good it will do for some newspaper editors to come here during the next few days when Liaquat Ali Khan will be coming. I would suggest however some editors going to Calcutta and just seeing things for themselves there. Few people in India have any idea of the real situation there. The news is so extraordinarily one-sided.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

11. To Kailas Nath Katju¹

New Delhi
March 30, 1950

My dear Kailas Nath,

...Rao² in his report says that the Calcutta press continues to show little restraint in public news of occurrences in Pakistan in most lurid manner. I must say that the Calcutta press, or most of it, has no reputation left in my eyes. I am afraid it is true that the press in Pakistan and in India has done more to worsen the crisis than anything else. I do not know how to measure the harm done by them, but they must be responsible for many killings and other occurrences. Apart from inflaming people's minds, there is an element of vulgarity and utter lack of decency.

Then again the totally one-sided pictures that are produced. Reading the Pakistan press one would say that very little had happened in Pakistan. Reading the Calcutta press, or indeed the press generally, one would say that very little had happened in India. As a matter of fact what has happened in West Bengal, as you well know, is terrible. Even in the U.P. things were bad for a few days, as also in Bombay and other places. There is a strong exodus of Muslims from the U.P. to Pakistan.

Everywhere there is this overwhelming fear of the future.

Dr Roy sent me his note and your note about the present situation. He is himself coming here tomorrow and we shall discuss these matters with him.

It is clear that the Calcutta local police has failed miserably, although the emergency police has done well. I have suggested to Dr Roy that H.V.R. Iengar might go from here for a few days to Calcutta just to advise and help.

Some Bengali members of Parliament here come to me and talk about relief being given to stranded Hindus in East Bengal. I spoke to you rather vaguely about it in Calcutta. It seems to me that it is quite impossible for us to undertake this huge responsibility. We can, however, do something. For instance, those people who are congregated at Narayanganj and other places on their way to India might be helped by us. As for the rest, we might in a small way relieve acute distress. How this is to be done, is not clear to me. Partly the Deputy High Commissioner might do it, though not officially. Partly Dr P.C. Ghosh's agency might do it, the Comilla Ashram etc. It has been suggested that this help should be given through some of the Hindu members of the East Bengal Assembly. This is rather a difficult and risky matter. Anyhow, it is for you and Dr Roy to consider what should be done.

Two and a half years ago, during the troubles in Delhi, at Mountbatten's suggestion, we organised a daily meeting in Government House of some Ministers, heads of departments, police, army etc. concerned with the disturbances and relief. Every morning about twenty or more persons met for half an hour or more in

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. B.G. Rao, representative in Calcutta of the Ministry of Rehabilitation.

Government House. We had maps and charts and reports. After consultation immediate orders were issued to persons concerned most of whom happened to be there. This was a kind of a replica of our war organisations which Mountbatten knew well. He presided over it at our request. I must say that this was a very successful experiment. We got over all the red-tape and delays. Immediate information came to us and was marked on charts and boards and maps, and immediate orders were issued. I suggested to Dr Roy last night that something of this kind might be done in Calcutta, i.e. all the people chiefly concerned might meet in Government House every morning for half an hour or so to exchange experiences and decide on the line of action to be taken. Perhaps you might discuss this with Dr Roy.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

12. To V.K Krishna Menon¹

New Delhi
March 30, 1950

My dear Krishna,

B.N. Rau has brought me your two letters of March 27th. I appreciate all you say and I have no intention of doing anything in a hurry. Nevertheless, my mind cannot get rid of the idea that I mentioned to you. It may be that I am thinking wrongly. But I have also some hunch for action to be taken at a particular moment. Anyhow I have come to no final decision yet. Many other things have intervened and I must face them.

I have just sent you a telegram about Addison's visit. I like Addison very much and in many ways it would be a good thing for him to come. But I do think that his presence here while the Liaquat Ali talks are going on would not only be completely misunderstood but might even come in the way of those talks. The only way to deal with Pakistan is to have frank talks without the presence of anyone else. Of course Addison being here would not mean that he would be present at our talks. But the whole approach would become different and less frank. The only chance of an agreement is the pressure of events and the realisation of the terrible consequences or the lack of it. I feel therefore that we must wait till these talks are over. Probably they will last two or three days. I shall let you know then. It

1. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

is quite possible that as a result of those talks, a situation might arise in which Addison's presence might be helpful.

Edwina's presence here during these days has been of enormous help to me. Naturally she takes up the same line as you have done.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

13. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi
1 April 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I sent you a letter many days ago, nearly two weeks, in which I made a suggestion about your going on our behalf to England and America for a few weeks or months.² I have had no acknowledgement of that letter and I was wondering if you received it.

I am greatly looking forward to your coming here before long. Things here are in a perfect jam, or, to put it differently, they seem to be moving in various directions at their sweet will. The outlook is none too hopeful.

Edwina is going away tomorrow. It has been delightful to have her here.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *ante*, pp. 127-128.

14. To K.M. Cariappa¹

New Delhi
1 April 1950

My dear Cariappa,

Your letter of today's date. I have thought over this matter again and consulted some of my colleagues. They are all of opinion that, quite apart from the aspect to which you refer, it is extraordinarily difficult for you to go, in view of developments in the country. You will remember that even in regard to your going

1. J.N. Collection.

away on tour for a few days, I suggested to you to avoid it, because your presence here was considered necessary. I wrote to you, because some of my colleagues in the Cabinet mentioned the matter to me. The whole country is at present in the grip of the most serious crisis we have had ever since the partition, and our future is entirely uncertain. I am myself totally unable to accept any engagement anywhere. In these circumstances the mere act of going or of announcing that you are likely to go, will have a bad effect on our people and, I have no doubt that questions will be asked in Parliament. It is true that you can come back at a day or two's notice. But the crisis cannot be dealt with at the last and then ask you to come back. We require your advice almost on day-to-day and your remaining in constant touch with a developing situation. I have no idea what things will be like a month or six weeks later. I can hardly imagine however that this major crisis will have passed of by then.

I suggest, therefore, that you might inform Field Marshal Slim that much as you would like to accept his invitation, it is difficult for you to say anything definite at this stage, as the Government here want you to stay on. You will, in any event, send some of your senior officers.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

15. Telegram to Gopinath Bardoloi¹

In view of exodus of large numbers of Muslims who were predominantly cultivators of jute from Goalpara district and adjacent areas, jute cultivation in that area has become of vital importance. This can only be done by experienced cultivators with knowledge of jute. Any delay in making arrangements would seriously affect our jute production and hence our general economy. It would jeopardise our plans. It is clear that we cannot wait for something to happen before arrangements are made. Therefore it is urgently necessary that immediate arrangements be made for temporary period with non-Muslim refugees coming from East Bengal, who belong to cultivating class and are acquainted with jute cultivation. We are prepared to give every assistance, financial and other, for this purpose. I trust you will have this done.²

1. New Delhi, 2 April 1950. File No. 17(211)/50-PMS.

2. See also *post*, pp. 217-219.

16. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi
April 2, 1950

My dear Mr President,

I thank you for your letter of the 2nd April about the issue of a proclamation of emergency.²

The Cabinet considered this matter on two occasions and discussed every aspect of it at some length. They considered the effect of such a proclamation both in India and abroad.³ They were naturally reluctant to take this step, unless circumstances compelled them to do so. While all of us are, to some extent, in a position to form some judgement of the situation in West Bengal, the person most entitled to form this judgement was Dr B.C. Roy, Chief Minister of West Bengal, who attended our Cabinet meetings when this matter was discussed. He repeated with great emphasis that additional powers for the use of the military were absolutely essential if the situation was to be controlled. Indeed some days ago the situation was so bad that in fact the civil Government had collapsed utterly in Howrah district and this state of disorder was rapidly spreading not only in other parts of the city but in the rural areas of Howrah district. Owing to the critical situation that had arisen, he had to call in the military and hand over charge to them immediately, declaring that martial law had been established. In fact the urgency was such that he did not have time even to consult the Central Government or any member thereof even by telephone. We learnt of this step having been taken by the West Bengal Government by radio that night and later by telephone.

Dr Roy said that the effect of that announcement was immediate and the situation improved. As a matter of fact, it was not quite correct to say that martial law had been proclaimed and this was made clear by me before Parliament a day later. Nevertheless, most people in India and abroad were naturally under the impression that martial law had been proclaimed in certain parts of Howrah. Reactions to this were on the whole good in India and other countries. It was felt that Government was tackling a difficult situation with firmness and vigour. Apart from this question of reactions, the actual result was definitely good and indeed some demands came that the area to which this military charge applied should be extended.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. A proclamation of emergency was kept ready for West Bengal, and the Governments of other provinces were ordered to control communal pressures and ask those officials who did not accept their policy to leave the service.

3. Rajendra Prasad had written on 2 April that the imposition of an emergency proclamation might lead the Muslim population to think that the situation had worsened and there was no safety for them while a section of the Hindu population, which was responsible for lawlessness, might feel elated at having compelled the Government to impose an emergency on the country. Prasad also contended that people in foreign countries might think that the Indian Government had failed to control the situation.



SIGNING THE INDO-PAKISTAN AGREEMENT, NEW DELHI, 8 APRIL 1950

SC

Tajwar

Shaikh Abdullah Prime Minister ~~Foreign~~
now → Ambassador ~~India~~

Security Council have suggested Sir Owen
Dixon's name for mediator. No other name
suggested. Formal meeting of Council probably
on eleventh. Dixon is ~~assistant~~ justice of
High Court of Australia and has high reputation
for independence, integrity and ability. ~~People~~
People who have
~~known~~ know him personally well ~~and~~ think
highly of him and strongly recommend our accepting
him. No other choice likely to be better.
In view of all circumstances we think we
should accept him. Hope you agree.

6/4/50

It was on Dr Roy's absolute insistence for the need of some additional powers that the Cabinet felt that they could not deny him what he wanted. The Chief Minister indeed made it clear that he could not carry on his Government, unless he had these additional powers.

On a full examination of this question by our Law Ministry and the Attorney-General, we were advised that the only possible way of giving these powers was by issue of a proclamation of emergency limited to Howrah district. Dr Roy hoped that it may be possible to withdraw the proclamation within a few days. At the same time he feared there was just a possibility of it having to be extended over other areas. In any event he felt that it would be a grave risk not to take this step now and it might be too late for it later.

The proclamation of emergency⁴ plus the Order⁵ under 359(1), though grave, were actually less than full martial law. The world generally was of opinion that martial law had been applied and whatever shock of surprise, appreciation or disapproval, this involved, had already been given. The fact that a proclamation of emergency was issued later could hardly add to that effect. Indeed it might even be explained that this was something considerably less than the martial law that, people had imagined, had been proclaimed.

The whole question, however, was ultimately one of the urgent necessities of the situation and in regard to that we could not but rely on the Chief Minister's knowledge and opinion. So far as our own information went, the situation continued to be a very difficult one, although in some areas, especially the Howrah area, there was a lull. In view of these circumstances, it was decided that the Proclamation of Emergency and the Order under 359(1) of the Constitution be issued.

I would like to add that the Law Ministry and the Attorney General were repeatedly asked by us as to whether the situation could not be met by action under ordinary law or by some further legislation. Their answer was in the negative.

This morning Dr B.C. Roy informed me that he would himself like to avoid, as far as possible, the issue of this proclamation of emergency. He was going to Calcutta today and he promised to let us know of the position there later. Till then, he said the Order should not issue. Thereupon I instructed the Law Ministry and the Home Ministry immediately to withhold the issue of this proclamation and Order and to inform you of this new development. The position now is that we

4. Article 356 of the Constitution provides that the President of India may, when he is satisfied that the machinery of the State Government has broken down, issue a Proclamation assuming to himself all the executive powers of the State and vesting the legislative powers in Parliament.
5. The State relied on a Presidential Order issued under article 359 of the Constitution which empowers the President, where a proclamation of emergency is in operation, to "declare that the right to move any court for the enforcement of such of the rights conferred by Part III as may be mentioned in the order... shall remain suspended for the period during which the proclamation is in force."

shall keep ready the proclamation and the Order, but we shall not issue it till the Chief Minister of West Bengal explicitly asks us to do this.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17. Cable to Indian Ambassadors¹

Liaquat and I had long preliminary conversation yesterday primarily about situation in two Bengals and Assam and protection and rights of minorities.² Our Secretariat and his are now working out plan of agreement which, apart from providing for recovery of looted property and abducted women, punishment of wrong-doers, prevention of inflammatory propaganda, adequate protection of migrants in transit and freedom to them to take away moveable property without harassment by customs authorities and compensation to those that may not return to their homes, will include affirmation by both Governments of determination to ensure effective equality of rights and opportunity to all citizens, irrespective of religion, freedom of movement, speech, occupation and worship and provision for appointment of joint minority commission to watch over implementation of agreement and report to two Governments who will be responsible for action thereon. Possibility of conversations on other disputes, e.g., trade war, evacuee property and Kashmir not excluded but we shall concentrate first on securing agreement to deal with urgent Bengal situation. I shall keep you informed of developments.

1. To V.K. Krishna Menon, Vijayalakshmi Pandit and S. Radhakrishnan, New Delhi, 3 April 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Nehru and Liaquat Ali met in Delhi from 2 April to 7 April 1950 and signed the Indo-Pakistan Agreement on 8 April.

18. To B.C Roy¹

New Delhi
April 4, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

For the last three days we have been having talks with Liaquat Ali Khan² and those he brought with him. Apart from my talks with Liaquat Ali, there have been

1. J.N. Collection.
2. The talks lasted a week and eleven drafts were produced before an agreement was finally signed.

talks on secretarial level. Liaquat Ali has met nearly all our Ministers at or after dinner. He has had a separate talk this afternoon with Maulana Azad. Tomorrow he is meeting Sardar Patel.

One thing I think is quite clear and that is the earnest desire of Liaquat Ali to come to some agreement. Our talks have been very frank. I believe that considerable pressure also has been brought to bear upon him by the U.K. Government. We are discussing this matter with the full realisation on each side that we are on the brink of a terrible catastrophe. This makes one think furiously and does not leave much room for round about talks or manoeuvring for position.

We have discussed this business of an Islamic State at great length. Maulana Azad has laid considerable stress upon it and asked Liaquat Ali to clear this up publicly. Liaquat Ali was at pains to point out that all that was meant by the Islamic State was that Muslims should have their personal law etc. In no sense should they or could they have special privileges. His State was an ordinary democratic State like England. He was prepared to make this perfectly clear at any time. In any joint agreement he was prepared to accept any common language which he and we could use. But he could not denounce the Islamic State phrase for obvious reasons, as this would give a handle to the reactionary elements in Pakistan. But apart from this, he was perfectly prepared and intended to make this fully clear.

About the machinery for implementation, we pressed for a joint commission for East and West Bengal and Assam. In practice he was not opposed to joint consideration of these problems, but he has pressed very much for separate commissions which could meet jointly, whenever so desired. His main fear appears to be that in view of the agitation for the joining together of East and West Bengal, which has thoroughly frightened Pakistanis, any such joint commission might give rise to the impression that this is a first step to that end. He has no objection to the work being joined, whenever necessary.

It is proposed that each Province should have a commission of its own, consisting of a representative each of the minority and the majority and a Provincial Minister plus the two Central Ministers from India and Pakistan. The commissions of two Provinces to meet together, whenever so desired by either of the Central Ministers. This would ensure joint working, whenever necessary.

Maulana Azad, as you know, has been very anxious to introduce minority ministers in East and West Bengal. Liaquat Ali Khan at first said that this principle should be accepted for the whole of India and Pakistan. But it was pointed out to him that it was difficult for us to make any such commitment about the whole of India, which had varied problems to face in different States. We had all along tried to give the fullest representation to the minorities. At last Liaquat Ali appears to have agreed to this principle being applied to East and West Bengal only for the time being. I presume you have no objection.

I am not going into other matters in this letter. On the whole they are proceeding on the lines we had indicated, with some variations. One new addition however

is the decision to have departments for the welfare of minorities in both the Central Governments. These departments to be in charge of a Minister. These departments might introduce some machinery in their respective Provinces for the welfare of minorities. As a matter of fact, we have been thinking of this for some time past independently of the present talks. The demand for this has come to us from Christians, and others also.

I think it is likely that we shall come to an agreement. This agreement will necessarily include a strong attempt to stop propaganda against the integrity of either India and Pakistan and against war.

I have no doubt in my mind that such an agreement, as we hope to arrive at, will be a good thing for us and will not only avert a major catastrophe but will tend to better conditions. How fast this process of improvement may be, I do not know. But having decided to go one way, we should throw all our weight in that direction. We may have to contend against intransigent groups and factions. Well, we shall just have to face them. There is no other or half-hearted course to adopt.

It is doubtful if many of the refugees in either countries will go back to their original homes. I hope however that a fair number might do so. I think they are likely to be much better off if they go back. We do not wish to force them to go back in any way, but we do hope to create conditions when they might feel inclined to go back.

In view of these probable developments, we should try to steer our course from now onwards so as to fit in with them. I hope that Muslims in Calcutta and West Bengal will not be encouraged in any way to go to Pakistan. Every move in either direction adds to the complication of the problem and the difficulties of ultimately solving it.

It seems to me that we have to contend against two factors in West Bengal, and to a much lesser extent, in other States. One is the popular passion and resentment against Pakistan, which develops into an anti-Muslim feeling. Secondly, the organised attempts of groups to exploit the present situation for political purposes. These groups may not be big, but they can take advantage of the present excitement. I do not suppose that these particular groups, whose aim is political, will be satisfied with any settlement, however good. Their aim is unsettlement and war. Therefore they are likely to give trouble. But I think that it should certainly be possible for us to allay popular passions somewhat and at the same time to deal with intransigent groups sternly.

We have to face, and you especially in Bengal, a situation, which is of the greatest peril to the whole country and which is looked upon by a large part of the world as dangerous for world peace. It is a heavy responsibility and the consequences are staggering. I think we have a chance to stop this rot, control it and give a different direction to events. It is a difficult job, but we can do it and I feel sure that we will do it. In spite of the loud shouting of certain newspapers and others, I am quite sure that there is a passionate desire in the country to have

a satisfactory settlement. I have received quite enough indications of this from odd quarters. Even the refugees from West Pakistan are anxious about it. A move in the right direction, therefore, will certainly be welcomed by vast numbers of people in India and even in Bengal. We should take it with faith and confidence and not be frightened into taking a false step.

About your message regarding the military, I am asking Baldev Singh to send proper instructions.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

19. Tragic Occurrences in Bengal¹

The Working Committee have viewed with horror the tragic occurrences which have recently taken place in East Bengal, with their deplorable repercussions in West Bengal and Assam, resulting in acts of brutality and inhumanity and in large-scale migrations of people. The Committee especially deplore outbursts of violence and communal strife, which can never lead to the solution of any problem. The Committee are convinced that this problem can only be solved by a strict adherence to the ideals of the Congress and the maintenance of a secular State which offers full security and opportunity to its citizens, regardless of religion and puts an end to communal divisions which breed hatred and conflict. While it is essential that, in existing circumstances, full protection and facilities be offered to those who wish to travel from one country to another, it is clear that vast migrations of people can only lead to deep injury to them as well as to the State. Conditions must, therefore, be created by both the States which afford peace, security and equality of opportunity to all concerned, so that these migrations might cease and evacuees might return to their old homes.

Even since the partition of India, followed by the great tragedies in the Punjab and consequent migrations, fear and distrust have grown. The emphasis on Islamic character of Pakistan has further unnerved the minorities and created an atmosphere of uncertainty. As a consequence millions of people continued to migrate in subsequent years from Sind and East Bengal to India. Nearly all the Hindu minority left Sind in the course of these migrations. The tragic occurrences of the past few

1. Resolution drafted by Nehru on 5 April 1950 and adopted by the Congress Working Committee on 7 April 1950 with minor changes. Printed in *Congress Bulletin*, 3 May 1950, pp. 104-105.

weeks have brought matters to a head and it has become imperative to put an end to these evil forces which threaten to bring ruin to millions of people.

The Working Committee therefore trust that in this hour of deep crisis, every right-thinking man and woman will help in bringing about a real and peaceful solution of this problem so as to avert the catastrophe which otherwise might become inevitable. The Committee hope that the efforts that are now being made to find a peaceful solution will succeed.

While the old refugee problem continues to demand attention a new refugee problem of vast dimensions has now arisen. The nation's resources must be used to aid these refugees by giving relief and providing rehabilitation and, above all, by helping in creating conditions so that refugees from either side might return to their original homes.

It is the duty of every Congressman and Congresswoman to face this crisis with dignity and strength and, ever remembering the ideals of the Congress, to work for their fulfilment. It is further the duty of every Indian to refrain from any word or deed which worsens the atmosphere which is already clouded with fear and passion.

20. To Sri Prakasa¹

New Delhi
April 6, 1950

My dear Sri Prakasa,

Thank you for your letter of April 2nd. Do not give up hope about me so easily. I have still enough energy and strength left in me to face many storms and I have every intention of overcoming and controlling the present storm.

I enclose a copy of a letter I have written to Bardoloi. I am anxious that some kind of an emergency council such as I have suggested might be formed in Assam and that you should play a prominent part in it. There is no question of overriding the law because all this is formalised through normal channels. But the real decisions are taken quickly from day to day in Council. I might tell you, for your private information, that if the Assam Government does not play up, we shall have to take other steps in the matter which might not be liked by the Assam Government. We cannot just play about with a serious situation, because some people do not wake up to it or they got their private prejudices.

1. J.N. Collection.

There is some hope that the talks with Liaquat Ali Khan may bear result. I cannot be sure yet. But one thing is certain that both are anxious to arrive at a settlement.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

21. To Syama Prasad Mookerjee¹

New Delhi
6 April 1950

My dear Syama Prasad,

I received your letter of today's date, tendering your resignation of your office as Minister, this morning.²

It is natural for me to regret the termination of a companionship in work, which has lasted for more than two and a half years. These two and a half years have been full of difficult problems and crises. We have faced them with such strength and ability as we possess and I suppose it will be for the future to judge how far we did our work well or badly.

I think you are right in saying that there is a marked difference of opinion between you and me in regard to the policy to be pursued in connection with the present situation in Bengal as well as in regard to some other matters also. In view of this difference of opinion, I can understand your desiring me to relieve you of your office. As you know, in any event, the President has to form a new Council of Ministers fairly soon and I had hoped that no change need be necessary before the formation of a new Cabinet. If, however, you wish me to relieve you even earlier, I can only regret it, but I shall have to abide by your wishes. I shall have to consult the President about this matter and shall write to you again. It is unfortunate that you should resign just when these talks with the Prime Minister of Pakistan are taking place. But if you feel strongly about it, there is no help for it. Still it would be better for any action to be delayed a little.

You refer to the policy we are pursuing in regard to Bengal. All of us have given the most anxious thought to this matter and you know how I feel about it. Whether our policy is correct in every detail or not, the future will show. But I

1. File No. 70/50, p. 3, President's Secretariat. Also published in *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 131-132.
2. S.P. Mookerjee stated that the agreement did not touch the basic problems and would not offer any solution. "It has certain features which are bound to give rise to fresh communal and political problems in India, the consequences of which we cannot foresee today."

am quite convinced of what should not be done and of the general direction that our policy should take. I can only function as Prime Minister, so long as that general direction is maintained.

In spite of differences of opinion, we have had the privilege of cooperation during a critical and fateful period of India's history. I am grateful to you for your uniform courtesy and friendliness during these trying times.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
6 April 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I received a letter from Syama Prasad Mookerjee today in which he tendered his resignation. I enclose a copy of this letter. I also enclose a copy of my reply. In view of all the circumstances, I feel I could send no other reply.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, p. 130.

23. To K.C. Neogy¹

New Delhi
7 April 1950

My dear Neogy,

I received your letter of the 6th April today.² I was sorry to read it because, as

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Neogy was not convinced of the terms of the Agreement and hence he could not support it. He listed his reasons in his letter of 6 April 1950: (1) The agreement would not yield the desired result. No one belonging to East Bengal could be expected to believe in the honesty of Pakistan after the recent happenings there; (2) those who had come away would never go back on Pakistan's assurances of future good conduct; (3) the appointment of Firoze Khan Noon as Governor of East Bengal, on the eve of the talks was proof of Pakistan's *mala fide* intention.

I hope you know, during these years of working together, I have been brought rather close to you and have admired your integrity and application to the work you have undertaken. On many subjects we have thought alike. It has been a pleasure to have you as a colleague.

I can hardly enter into an argument with you on the subject of the proposed agreement with Pakistan in this letter. I do not yet know whether it will go through or not. If it is finalised, I should like you to see it as a whole and to decide what was better for our country or for Bengal or for the minority in East Bengal—having this agreement or not having any agreement.

I am a little surprised at your thinking that I tried to exclude you deliberately from some informal conferences that we had.³ It was impossible to have Cabinet meetings every day at short notice. The burden on me was great and I had to consult some people immediately if anything new happened. For the last two years, whether in connection with Kashmir or other matters, a kind of convention has grown up for me to consult Sardar Patel and Gopaldaswami. The officials concerned were Bajpai and Dutt who were meeting the Pakistan people. On one or two occasions Maulana Azad was asked to be present, partly because he represented a viewpoint which none of us could represent, partly because he is one of the very few elders of the Congress, who has always been consulted in such matters during the last 30 years. Indeed it was our practice for many years to make him our representative in such matters. There was and could be no question of your having lost my confidence.

If you wish to resign, of course I cannot prevent you from doing so and I should not like to embarrass you in any way. Nevertheless, I must express my regret that you should think of doing so, especially at a moment like this. I suggest that you might talk over this matter with me in a day or two.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. "I never expected to be called in for any discussion with the Pakistan delegation, but I wonder if it was deliberate on your part to exclude me even from the series of informal conferences which you had with some of your colleagues and officers."

24. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
April 7, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I enclose the latest draft of the agreement.² This has not been finalised yet. But, insofar as it goes, it has been more or less agreed to. I am meeting Liaquat Ali tomorrow morning for a final talk. He is still pressing me hard for something on the lines of the last paragraph that we have omitted. Of course we are not going to have that. He intends leaving Delhi tomorrow afternoon.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collecton.

2. Apart from resolving some of the trade problems arising from India's devaluation in September 1949, the Agreement was mainly concerned with the treatment of minorities in the two countries. India and Pakistan emphasised that the allegiance and loyalty of the minorities was to the state of which they were citizens. It was to their own Governments that they should look for the redress of their grievances. Both Governments affirmed complete equality of all citizens and agreed to extend all facilities to migrate from East Bengal, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Each Government would set up a commission of inquiry to report on the causes and extent of the communal disturbances. The two Governments decided to appoint a minister each to remain in the affected areas for such periods as might be necessary and also to constitute separate minority commissions in East Bengal, West Bengal and Assam.

25. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Conversation between Prime Minister and Liaquat Ali Khan concluded today in agreement which was signed today. Provisions of agreement relate primarily to solutions of problem of minorities in East Bengal, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, but some are of general applications to any parts of India or Pakistan where communal trouble occurs. Agreement will be presented to Parliaments in New Delhi and Karachi on Monday 10th April. For your personal information its features are:

(1) Reaffirmation by both Governments of their determination to restore to minority sense of security and ensure real equality of citizenship. East and West will include minority member in Cabinet. Assam Cabinet has minority representation already.

1. Drafted by Nehru, New Delhi, 8 April 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

(2) Elimination of any harassment to migrants in transit at custom posts etc., protection during journey, freedom to bring away personal movables including jewellery and cash not exceeding Rs.150/- per adult and Rs.75/- per child. Ownership of migrant immovable property will continue to be vested in him. If he returns by end of 1950, every effort will be made to restore it to him. Where restoration is not possible Government concerned will help to rehabilitate him. A migrant who does not return within prescribed period will be free to sell or transfer his immovable property and special machinery will be created to help him to realise rent for it.

(3) Immediate appointment of Committees of Enquiry in each of four affected areas. Chairman will be High Court Judge and minority will be represented; trial of wrong-doers where necessary by Special Courts.

26. To S. Radhakrishnan¹

New Delhi
8 April 1950

My dear Radhakrishnan,

...Today Liaquat Ali and I signed an Agreement. This was done after seven days' exhausting discussions. I think this is a good thing and will certainly produce some good results. I am sure that Liaquat Ali is perfectly sincere in this matter, though I am not sure of his colleagues. In any event, we should play straight and do our best. There is no other way. Unfortunately people in Bengal are so worked up emotionally that it is a little difficult to reason with them.

In your letter of the 28th March you suggest that you might be relieved at the end of one year. I confess I do not like the prospect. You have done well in Moscow and it would be a great pity if there was a change. This year, I think, is critical from every point of view. I hope therefore that you will be able to stay on.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

27. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
April 8, 1950

My dear Bidhan,

I tried to telephone to you this morning to tell you that Liaquat Ali Khan and I

1. J.N. Collection.

had signed the Agreement. I was told from Calcutta that you had gone to Puri. Thereupon I sent you telegrams both to Puri and Calcutta. A copy of the Agreement has also been sent to you. It will be announced for the first time in Parliament on Monday forenoon and that same afternoon I shall address a press conference. I also intend broadcasting on Monday night.

The Agreement as signed is more or less what we told you. Apart from the details of the Agreement, I feel sure that the fact that it has been signed is itself a major occurrence and something to the good. In any event it is to be accepted and worked to the best of our ability. I earnestly hope that your Government and the people in Bengal will look upon it in this way. I know well the deep feelings that move them and their lack of faith in the *bona fides* of Pakistan. Nevertheless, this is the only way to approach the problem, to control it, and to move towards a satisfactory solution, not only of this but of the wider Indo-Pakistan relationship.

Immediately questions arise about the appointment of a Central Minister² to work in East and West Bengal and Assam and the appointment of a Minority Minister to your Cabinet. I hope you will give thought to this and let me know what you propose. The Central Minister's responsibility will be great and he should be a first-rate man. He must be a person who understands the situation thoroughly and at the same time is not swept away by too much emotion. He must be a person who can get on fairly well with the Pakistan authorities. A diplomat is little good if he cannot get on at the other end. His usefulness is limited, unless he can create an atmosphere of cooperative effort.

You will of course carefully consider the various clauses of the Agreement and give effect to such as apply to your Government. We are in honour bound to do so.

I hope that you are getting full value from the use of the military. If there is any difficulty and if you want any further help in that direction, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. C.C. Biswas was ultimately appointed.

28. To Kailas Nath Katju¹

New Delhi
8 April, 1950

My dear Kailas Nath,

I enclose a copy of a letter I have sent to Dr B.C. Roy. I have no doubt that our

1. J.N. Collection.

Agreement will be welcomed all over India. I am doubtful about the reaction in West Bengal. I am also sure that the immediate reaction among the minorities in East Bengal will be good, because it will relieve the tension under which they have been living. I earnestly hope that mere emotion and passion in West Bengal will not make people feel that they must oppose this Agreement or remain idle in regard to it. That would be a fatal blunder, putting us in the wrong completely.

I do hope therefore that you will try your utmost both with the prominent people and with the members to induce them to take a right view of the situation. From the narrowest point of view it is necessary. From the broader point of view, it is even more necessary.

I saw Amtus Salam tonight before her departure for Calcutta. I think in view of the Agreement, it is even more necessary to carry out some of Amtus Salam's proposals, that is our arranging for workers in East Bengal. I hope you will discuss this matter with her. Those whom I have consulted here liked the proposal. Money does not matter, where the stakes are so important. In any event much money is not involved. I think we should start with a relatively small number of workers—say 25 or 30—and give them necessary assistance for about three months.

I have twice written to you about medical and Red Cross supplies. We shall gladly send these, if you need them. So far as I know, no demand has come.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

29. To Gopinath Bardoloi¹

New Delhi
8 April 1950

My dear Bardoloi,

You have received separately a copy of the Agreement arrived at between Liaquat Ali Khan and me today. I need not impress upon you the importance of this Agreement and the vital consequences that might flow from it, if we act rightly. I hope you will give the fullest effect to it and in addition, try your utmost to create an atmosphere which is favourable. We have to go full steam ahead. We have taken a turn in life's journey, so far as our nation is concerned, and it would be foolish for us now to loiter or linger in the way or to hesitate.

1. J.N. Collection.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

I enclose a copy of letter² I am sending to Dr Roy on this subject.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. See *ante*, item 27.

30. To B.V. Keskar¹

New Delhi
8 April 1950

My dear Keskar,

Your letter of April 6th. I entirely agree with you that we should approach the people as much as possible and explain our position. Now that this Agreement with Pakistan has been arrived at, we have to push it through and create a better atmosphere. This is quite essential.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2

KASHMIR

1. Solution by Mediation¹

Sir, it was very good of you to say some kind words about my coming back and about the concern you had for my health.² I did not know that people were concerned about my health, because it keeps in very good condition. And as to your concern about my going abroad, you might perhaps have thought that I was going to some wild country where there were dangers all round. I am very glad to see all of you here. It was my intention first to write out something in the form of a handout and give it to you, but there were two things. Firstly, I just could not find the time and secondly I did not quite know what to write, because so far as my visit to the United States, Canada and England is concerned, I find that there has been such a great deal of coverage in the Indian press about it, about what I said and about what others said, that I can hardly add to it. It would perhaps be merely repeating what I said and so I do not propose to say anything now and it would be far better and save your time and mine if you indicated, by questions or otherwise, what you wish me to say.

Q: In one of your press conferences you gave some indication about the settlement of Kashmir issue by mediation or arbitration. Would you kindly tell us what form of arbitration or award is given?

JN: I do not know which conference you are referring to. Sometime between midnight and 2 A.M. I talked to some pressmen at Cairo.³ Perhaps you are referring to that. There was no question of arbitration mentioned by me or anybody there. What I said was that the settlement of the Kashmir issue or any such issue can be of three ways. One is obviously the one of war, whatever the result. The other is the continuation of the stalemate as it is now. And the third is some kind of settlement by mediation. I definitely said that in an issue of this kind, arbitration is not possible; it is out of the question.⁴ Mediation means other people helping

1. Press conference, New Delhi, 16 November 1949. The P.I.B. version is printed.
2. Usha Nath Sen, President of the Delhi Press Association, welcomed Nehru and congratulated him on his successful American tour. "We were worried because of your health, — we feel that providence has brought you back safe and in full health."
3. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 458-459.
4. Despite the ceasefire agreed upon by India and Pakistan on 1 January 1949, no truce had been achieved. The hurdle was the disbandment of the 'Azad Kashmir' forces which India wanted to be discussed. Pakistan contended that the question properly belonged to a later stage, between the establishment of a truce and the actual holding of the plebiscite. India, however, felt so strongly on the point that she rejected the proposal that it should be submitted, along with other points of difference, to the arbitration of Admiral Nimitz.

the parties themselves in coming to some settlement. There can be no compulsion about mediation, and I said further that we want to do everything to increase the prestige of the United Nations. It would be desirable for the United Nations to be associated with that, as they had been associated in the past.

Q: In view of the mediation results achieved so far, do you propose to continue it? Would you suggest what other kind of mediation is possible?

JN: Well, I am not prepared to say that there had been no result at all. There have been many results. One major result which we aimed at the start when we went to the United Nations was to prevent the spreading of this conflict. It is a very big thing and we have succeeded in that. And other things have happened, it is true that we have not succeeded as they or we hoped. As I said, if you rule out mediation then there are only two things that remain i.e., continuing the deadlock or war. And so far as we are concerned I have repeatedly declared it before you and others that we want to rule out resumption of hostilities for the settlement of this dispute or any dispute. Of course, if we are attacked we have to resume hostilities. In fact, on many occasions I have precisely put forward this proposal that whatever way might be found to resolving the Kashmir dispute, war should be ruled out. I have put this to Pakistan and I have put it to others. If you rule out war, then that fact alone reduces a great deal of tension psychologically and otherwise. If you consider the matter in a different context may be it is a bit difficult because it will take time, may be one has to go step by step, but there is no other way. If you therefore, rule out war, it is either deadlock or settlement brought about by mediation and the deadlock will continue till there is settlement through mediation. That is the only way now. When I say mediation, it does not necessarily mean any type or kind of extent of mediation. That is a matter for consideration. But I did say that it should be under the auspices of the United Nations; what form it should take can be considered further.

Q: You said that you had put it to Pakistan that there should be no solution by war. Does that mean that this has been expressed in writing through diplomatic channels?

JN: Not formally, but otherwise.

Q: Has war been ruled out by the other side?

JN: Nothing has been said on the subject by the other side.

Q: Do you rule out partition?⁵

JN: Partition cannot be ruled out or something of that kind, because modification of boundaries etc., cannot be ruled out.

Q: Don't you think continuation of this stalemate amounts to partition?

JN: Till it continues.

Q: Does it mean that the plebiscite is ruled out?

JN: Certainly not. Plebiscite is not ruled out. I have repeatedly talked about Kashmir and I don't like to repeat myself. But, nevertheless, as questions are put which seem to imply that there is some misunderstanding, I shall repeat myself. Right from the beginning, that is to say, long before even the conflict took place, our declared policy was that the people should decide. How they should decide is another matter. Normally, we thought at that time that the best way to decide a complicated issue was for the people to elect an assembly by adult franchise or something approaching adult franchise and that assembly should decide after considering every factor, what the future of the state should be. That is our general policy. We declared that policy again in regard to Kashmir specifically before Pakistan had a say in the matter. It is not a kind of agreement with Pakistan; it was an independent policy and it was unilaterally declared that the people of Kashmir should decide, and the people of Kashmir wanted so to decide. In fact, if I may go further back, even long before partition took place, that was the demand or wish of the people of Kashmir as represented by their nationalist organisation and we entirely agreed with that that this should be so. And that would have been so if this sudden invasion of Kashmir had not taken place.⁶ Well, even at that time when we started participating in defending Kashmir, we stated again that while Kashmir had acceded to us legally and constitutionally and was part of India because of that accession, nevertheless, finally the people of Kashmir themselves should decide by whatever manner it may be, by plebiscite, referendum or by an elected Assembly. It was at a much later stage that the United Nations Commission came into the

5. The ceasefire effected on 1 January 1949 by the five-member U.N. Commission on Kashmir left 32,000 square miles of Kashmir territory, comprising the western and northern regions, under Pakistani occupation, and the remaining 54,000 square miles, including the Srinagar valley and Jammu, as a part of India.
6. The All Jammu-Kashmir National Conference under the leadership of Shaikh Abdullah adopted a resolution in October 1939 which was described as the "national demand". This resolution advocated responsible government, joint electorates based on adult franchise and legislative control of Government expenditure. The National Conference cooperated with the Congress Party towards the end that Kashmir stay within India.

picture and ultimately they proposed this plebiscite, and we naturally accepted it. Of course, there is much to happen before the plebiscite. The conditions which will govern the plebiscite, of course, became a very important factor because at that time parts of Kashmir had been invaded and occupied by hostile forces. So, the question of plebiscite remains. Whether it is a plebiscite, whether it is some other form of referendum, it is a matter which can be decided later, but ultimately there can be no doubt that the people of Kashmir themselves will decide. And this is regardless of what Pakistan wish or do not wish whether they wish it or not—the people of Kashmir will decide; they are the major party to this. We talk too much about India and Pakistan; it is the people of Kashmir who count, whose future is to be decided.

Q: We would like to know, if you would tell us, what kind of misunderstandings about the situation in India or the affairs of India you came across in the U.S.A.?

JN: That is a very difficult question to answer, it is rather vague. Among those who know, who are supposed to know, there is not very much misunderstanding about facts. May be some facts were not known to them in details—but generally the facts were known. Among the general public there is misunderstanding about many matters.

Q: If you give us broadly what are the types of misunderstandings of the general public in America, that would be very helpful.

JN: One thing applies not only to the United States but to others also. The partition of India has been viewed as if the Muslims and non-Muslims of India have been completely separated on a religious basis, that is to say, as an outcome of the old Muslim League's or Mr Jinnah's theory of two nations. Now, so far as we are concerned, we never accepted that theory. We repudiated it throughout. We agreed ultimately to the partition of India not on the basis of that theory but on a territorial basis, some territories deciding to part from India if they so chose. The method of deciding this was not very satisfactory, I must confess, that is to say, the mass of the people did not decide but certain elected members of elected assembly decided. However, we were in a hurry. Why were we in a hurry, and why did we accept something which we disliked intensely and which we throughout felt would lead to very dangerous consequences? The fact that it did lead to dangerous consequences is evident now. Well, it was largely because of a growing sense of frustration in us. We felt, and I think we had reasons and justification for feeling so, that this communal separatism that had grown in India had been greatly encouraged by the British Government in this country not today but for a generation past. And it is true, of course, that no amount of encouragement can produce something out of nothing. There may be reasons for it, may be our own faults,

errors and mistakes, but the fact is that it was encouraged and it came in the way of our achieving political freedom. I have no doubt at all that if we had not that difficulty, India would have become an independent country many years earlier. So there was this element of frustration and this thing was always coming in the way. Further, with the background of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy we could not think in terms of forcible repression of considerable sections of the community, and whether rightly or wrongly, it was patent that a considerable section of Muslims did feel that way. They had been swayed by a certain religious consideration and it was difficult to argue with them on logical, political or economic lines and there was continued trouble in India especially in the Punjab. So, we felt that it would be far better to allow them to go the way they wanted to go. The other alternative was one of conflict, suppression and frustration all the time.

We hoped that after doing that this feeling of separatism would really grow less and that although we might form a separate state it would be a friendly and cooperative state and that we might come together again. Ultimately it was a feeling of frustration that led us to accept that, but we never accepted that two-nation theory. We accepted a territorial division on a territorial basis. We did not accept the two-nation theory, because, first of all, it seemed to us totally inapplicable in the modern world. It is a medieval conception to which not even Pakistan can really give effect. We did not want to give effect to it also because it is quite impossible to give effect to it when Hindus and Muslims are spread out all over India in every village. Even now in spite of the big migrations, etc. which have taken place from Pakistan to India and from India to Pakistan, 35 million Muslims remain in India and even now 14 to 15 million Hindus remain in Eastern Pakistan although there are few Hindus in Western Pakistan. If you accept the two-nation theory, i.e. nationality goes by religion, it means that all the 35 million inhabitants owe their loyalty and allegiance to a neighbouring state. May be that recent events shook people up. That is true but we have to look over a long distance and not think of the present or the next year and we simply break up, India and Pakistan, if we accept that theory. Therefore, we resisted. This whole Kashmir issue is an interesting example of the application or non-application of this theory. The whole argument on behalf of Pakistan proceeds on the theory that Kashmir must come to Pakistan. Once you accept that theory it may follow, but we did not accept it and what is much more important, the people of Kashmir do not and did not accept it. Did not, I say, because every effort was made in the past by Mr Jinnah himself and other leaders of the Muslim League to win over the Kashmiris to the fold of the Muslim League. Mr Jinnah went to Kashmir, others went there, and they failed completely. The one powerful national organization of Kashmir resisted that and rejected that theory. That organisation itself was predominantly Muslim: the population is Muslim and the leadership is Muslim. The most popular leader of Kashmir was a Muslim. But there were Hindus and Sikhs in it too. Its basis and outlook was nationalist. It resisted the Maharaja's rule because it wanted autonomy and freedom for the

state: and when the Muslim League wanted to win it over, they argued it with them and talked it over, then ultimately they rejected that theory because they said it did not fit in with their conception. So, long before the partition, for the last twelve years or more, this thing was going on and Kashmir refused to accept the two-nation theory. So when partition came the question was not a new one for them.

There are other reasons for them to be more closely associated with India—political reasons, economic reasons, etc. Their whole state movement was connected with the freedom movement of the states in India. There was an All India States People's Conference which included all the Indian states. It was a very representative organization and Kashmir played a very important part in it. In fact, if I am not wrong, the last President of the All India States People's Conference was Shaikh Abdullah, who is the President of the Kashmir National Conference and who is the Prime Minister there now. So it was connected with the political movement in India—not directly connected with the National Congress but with the Indian states people's movement which was indirectly associated with the National Congress. There were of course many personal contacts with Mahatma Gandhi, or with me, or Maulana Azad and others. So that the whole Kashmir national movement had been trained in a particular progressive direction, and if I may say so, most of the gentlemen who are in Pakistan i.e. most of the people—Pakistanis or Kashmiris—were people who opposed the freedom of Kashmir in those days of struggle in Kashmir.⁷

This was the position when partition came and at that time naturally they thought more in terms of their own political associations and colleagues and interests because they considered the national movement an Indian and progressive movement. They themselves were progressive people while they considered the leaders of Pakistan politically and economically reactionary. They were trained to look on these matters more from the political and economic angle than the religious angle and that was a big difference and that difference has persisted and has directed their action.

Q: Are we recognising new China immediately or are we deferring recognition along with Mr Bevin and Mr Acheson?⁸

7. Between 15 August and the end of October 1947, Pakistan in its determination to force the accession of Kashmir used every kind of pressure, including blockade, on the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. Essential supplies, *en route* to Kashmir through Pakistan, were prevented from reaching the state.
8. During his visit to the U.S.A., Nehru had touched on the question of the recognition of the People's Government of China. He had pointed out the need for recognizing "realities". India herself recognized the "reality" after Nehru's return home, On 30 December 1949, this decision was taken in consultation with other members of the Commonwealth. India, in fact, pressed for an early recognition of the Communist Chinese Government and did not wish to wait for U.S. action. See also *Selected Works*, (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 297-299.

JN: Neither, i.e. we shall recognise China when we have consulted our representative⁹ who has just come here—and arrived at our own conclusion about the matter. We communicate with and consult other countries but the decision is ours and the time for decision is ours.

Q: What will be the position of Tibet in relation to India?

JN: About the position of Tibet, I may say that for the last 40 years or so, that is to say, during the regime of the British in India, a certain autonomy of Tibet was recognised by the then movement of India and there were direct relations between Tibet and India.

As regards China's position in Tibet, a vague kind of suzerainty was recognised. All these things were never clearly defined as to what the position was, matters remained vague and they have remained vague in that way. We have a representative in Lhasa. We trade with them directly but in a vague sense we have accepted the fact of China's suzerainty. How far it goes, one does not know.

Q: As a result of your visit to the U.S.A. and your private talks with the President and the State officials there, will it be correct to assume that a definite move will be made towards the settlement of the Kashmir issue by mediation?

JN: That is a matter for the Security Council. I understand that the U.N. Commission on this issue has been writing its report in Geneva and that probably they will continue writing it for some time. Probably next month they will go to New York and Lake Success to present their report and the Commission will then consider it.¹⁰ I do not know what you mean by 'as a result of my talks.' We talked about many things, including this subject, but the decision will be with the Security Council.

Q: Will mediation, if it takes place, be under the same conditions which were laid down for a plebiscite, i.e. withdrawal of 'Azad Kashmir' forces and so on?

JN: There is a certain confusion in that question. Mediation means exploring avenues of settlement and I would personally suggest that whoever the mediators may be they should have full freedom to explore every avenue and not be restricted by any terms of reference. But your question referred to something else, 'Azad

9. K.M. Panikkar.

10. On 5 December 1949, the Commission presented to the Council its third interim report. It analysed the respective standpoints of India and Pakistan. India's position was that she was in Kashmir by right and that Pakistan could not aspire to an equal footing. Pakistan considered herself an equal party to the dispute and hence entitled to equal rights and considerations. Out of this fundamental divergence arose the three problems regarding the withdrawal of forces, the 'Azad' forces, and the northern areas.

Kashmir' Forces'¹¹ disbandment etc. That has nothing to do with mediation as such, but it is an absolutely essential thing so far as we are concerned.

Q: May I ask whether one of the first things which received your consideration on your return to India is the economic deadlock existing between India and Pakistan, especially since devaluation?¹²

JN: I cannot say much about this. It is undoubtedly important. But I am not myself fully acquainted with the developments since I went, except that there is this deadlock. Of course, the deadlock came about because of the devaluation of the rupee and the non-devaluation of the Pakistan rupee. Now take jute, for instance. The jute factories are not prepared to pay the price that is demanded for it. We cannot force them to pay it and unless the price of jute is profitable for them to buy, they cannot buy it and the jute remains there and we have to make other arrangements. That applies to other commodities too.

Q: Was the entry of the R.S.S. into the Congress referred to you before your departure for U.S. and if not, whether you, as author of the idea of a secular State, wish to make efforts for reversing that decision?

JN: No reference was made to me and no such question arose. But naturally after my return I was interested in finding out what had happened. I found that what had happened, was this. Someone from Bihar had made a reference to the Congress Working Committee, a kind of constitutional reference, whether under the terms of the Congress Constitution a member of the R.S.S. could join the Congress, and a reply was sent that "Yes, he can," which was a perfectly correct reply, as everybody can join except members of certain organisations which are definitely

11. When the Resolution of 13 August 1948 was passed, Pakistan saw that its army had to leave Kashmir. She therefore organised 'Azad Kashmir' forces into a fighting army of 32 battalions to take over from the Pakistan army. India urged the disbanding and disarming of these forces as a condition vital to the holding of a plebiscite. The Commission's Resolution of 5 January 1949 spoke of disposal of these forces after the Truce Agreement but before the plebiscite. India insisted, however, that these forces should be liquidated first, before she could agree to a withdrawal of the bulk of the Indian forces in the state.
12. Following the devaluation of the British pound sterling by 30.5 per cent in relation to the dollar in September 1949, the other Commonwealth countries, including India but excluding Pakistan, devalued their currencies proportionately. The consequent depreciation of the Indian currency in terms of the Pakistani currency led to the gradual severance of inter-dominion trade, culminating in a deadlock particularly in the jute and coal business. The jute mills in West Bengal could not buy raw jute because of higher prices and India imposed an embargo on coal supply to Pakistan on 24 December 1949.

specified in our rules.¹³ But there is something more to it than that, and perhaps may be in a day or two, the Congress President or someone on his behalf will make this clear. If you look at the R.S.S. constitution, there is nothing objectionable in it at all. If you look at the Congress constitution, you have to accept anybody who comes in. But there are two or three other aspects. The R.S.S. is definitely a volunteer organisation. In fact, its very name is Swayamsevak Sangh. According to Congress rules, no Congressman can belong to a volunteer organisation other than the Seva Dal, which is its own, so that if an R.S.S. man wants to join, immediately the question arises whether he can remain in the R.S.S. because he belongs to a volunteer organisation, which is not accepted by the Congress, so that indirectly he cannot join the Congress without getting out of the other. But this is, in a sense, constitutional quibbling. The real thing is more basic. The approach of the R.S.S. to national and other problems is definitely a communal approach, whereas you are more or less acquainted with the Congress approach which is national, secular and non-communal. Therefore, the R.S.S. approach does not fit in with the Congress mentality.

Q: Can you tell us whether as a result of your visit to the United States the prospect of larger American investment and technical assistance to India is brighter today?

JN: I should imagine so. Naturally, so far as I was concerned, I dealt with broader issues, general principles and the like. I did not discuss any immediate thing. That is a matter for our Ambassador and our other representatives to discuss. I should imagine that the prospects are much brighter.

Q: Will you be attending the Commonwealth Conference in Ceylon?

JN: Yes. Although nothing is definitely settled yet, I understand it is proposed to have some kind of a Foreign Ministers' Conference in Ceylon.¹⁴ In fact, it was proposed about a year ago. It was proposed to have it this year. It could not be held because that other conference was held in April in London. So it is really the old idea that is being revived now.

13. In September 1949, the Congress Working Committee decided, on a reference made to it by the Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee, that R.S.S. workers could join the Congress. Subsequently, addressing Congress workers in Kanpur, Pattabhi Sitaramayya said: "The R.S.S. is not the enemy of the Congress. It is not a communal political organisation."

14. The Conference at Colombo from 9 to 14 January 1950 was the first conference to be held by the Commonwealth countries for discussing foreign affairs.

Q: Could you kindly tell us what lesson you have brought for the benefit of India by studying the manner in which political institutions are working in America and how their economic policies are yielding results?

JN: The American type of democratic institutions, economic policy etc. are the results of many causes beginning with the original establishment of colonies in America with the vast hinterland, first of all, cutting themselves adrift from what was then feudal Europe, starting certainly with the feudal background of Europe but without those feudal encumbrances and developing democracy with enormous opportunities, space, area and everything. In a space of 150 years or more, they have arrived at this stage of tremendous prosperity and production. If you go to Europe, there are feudal type of countries with big backgrounds of history of conflicts, fights, ups and downs and the like, so that quite apart from any ideological policies—economic or other that you may aim at—past history and present circumstances help or hinder or at any rate affect the policies produced. People who think that we can reproduce American conditions here are obviously mistaken, because conditions are different here. We may learn much from America, I am sure we can. We may learn much from England, from what they are doing there. But ultimately we shall have to adapt all that we learn to present conditions in India and also to the background of our thought and culture.

Q: Would you indicate how soon the question of recognition of new China is going to be decided?

JN: You do not expect me to fix dates; can you? Obviously these questions cannot be very long delayed.

Q: Was it your experience that the Americans today are treating communism as a bogey or, are they overrating communism? Is it your impression?

JN: I do not know what you expect me to say. It was my impression that not only in America, but elsewhere also, people are, if I may say so, frightened of future prospects. Some are afraid of communism; some are afraid of something else. All over there is a kind of fear complex. There is plenty in the world which makes one rather anxious about the future of the world. But it is no use getting frightened about it. So far as the United States of America is concerned, they are powerful in every sense of the word and they are too well to do. I should have thought that they are, of all the countries in the world, most favourably placed today in the present context, to affect the world for good, as well as, of course, otherwise, and remain secure. Of course, there is no absolute security in the world.¹⁵

15. The purpose of the Marshall Plan, the Western Union, the Atlantic Pact and the Federation in West Germany was to prevent communist expansion.

Q: May I ask if you can say a few words about the famous American materialism and, generally speaking, if you believe now in better understanding in future between the East and the West?

JN: You talk about materialism. I am reminded of the so-called spiritualism of India. Well, a person can call himself spiritual and yet indulge in certain practices which according to my thinking completely lack spirituality, because certain religious observances do not by themselves make a man spiritual. So, you have to judge a person or a country, not from the superficial outward observances but you have to go a little more deeper. While undoubtedly American civilisation in the modern context has laid the greatest stress on what might be called material advance and on the money factor—the dollar etc. I could not conceive of that tremendous advance without spiritual factors underlying it. I found it true all the more when I was there. I do not admire money; it does not interest me. Of course, money is useful, I must admit that. So that many factors in American life which lay stress on the money factor did not appeal to me very much. But I was rather astonished, not astonished exactly because I knew that before, when I saw the other side of the American character which is very idealistic and very sentimental.

Q: When you envisage that mediation in Kashmir has unlimited scope, could there be the possibility at a certain state of a guarantee of independence?

JN: I do not myself see how on a plebiscite anywhere, more especially in Kashmir, with an electorate totally unused to this kind of voting you can put complicated questions of that sort. But quite apart from that, I do not think any independence of Kashmir can be real independence in the real sense of the word. After all what does independence mean? It means foreign relations and defence. This business of India and Pakistan guaranteeing independence to Kashmir would probably mean, unless after many years a change occurs, poor Kashmir would be faced with ascendancy by both. In other words, Kashmir will not develop at all. There will be trouble in Kashmir all the more. I do not see how it is practicable. I have no objection theoretically to it. But practicably I do not see how it can work.

Q: Would you, Sir, after the discovery of the New World think it advisable to revive the major industrial policy of the Government of India?

JN: No, I do not think so.

Q: Don't you think that the policy of mixed economy has been a complete failure, and it tends either to drift towards nationalisation or towards private economy?

JN: No, I do not think so. I do not think it has been a failure. It has not been tried yet. How can it fail without being tried. I do not myself see, apart from persons theorising nationalisation, or full private economy, in a country like India at present. You have to choose a middle course. Where you balance the two is a different matter. It depends upon circumstances.

Q: Could you tell us why you are so much enamoured of mixed economy?

JN: It is the only intelligent solution of the Indian problem.

Q: Don't you see that the policies of the Government of India just now are drifting more and more towards complete subservience to the capitalists?

JN: I do not think so. May I just draw your attention—because memories are short—to a certain thing that is called Gandhian technique. People seem to think that if we are polite we surrender. We have been taught all the time to be polite even to our enemies and our opponents. We shall continue to be polite, except when we lose our tempers, to all kinds and classes of people and invite them to cooperate with us and get the best out of them and then decide on our policy accordingly.

Q: Could you tell us something about your talks with the Negro leaders of America?

JN: I had the privilege of meeting a number of very eminent Negro leaders in America and they told me both of the great progress they have made and also of the great disabilities they suffer from. Some thought that their progress was satisfactory, others thought that it did not go far enough and they were impatient. Naturally, as here, there are people of all types. Obviously, they have great disabilities, as obviously also they have made great progress.

Q: Was the question of the scaling down of sterling balances¹⁶ in any way discussed with the members of the British Cabinet in London?

JN: I did not discuss it at all.

Q: Has a decision been taken, Sir, about the wheat deal that we heard of while you were in America?

16. In July 1949, at a meeting of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers in London, an agreement was reached for the release and convertibility of the sterling balances. India's sterling balances stood around £650 million.

JN: As I told you when I referred to these matters earlier, I left further discussions to our representative there, Sir Chintaman Deshmukh, who represents us. I understand he will be coming back to India in a fortnight's time or so.

Q: There was a suggestion that you might be invited to mediate in the problem of Indo-China.

JN: These are totally irresponsible suggestions made by some people sometimes that I should mediate here and there. I am going to mediate nowhere.

Q: Is it true that Americans are not prepared to finance any large-scale Governmental projects like the steel factory or such things because they think that these cannot be run by the Government people?

JN: I don't think any such question arose. We had no such question arising in that way.

Usha Nath Sen: Well, Sir, you have answered so many questions, you must have some rest. Thank you.

JN: There was one thing I was going to suggest to you. That is that perhaps we might fix a definite day every month for a press conference instead of having them casually at all times. We might fix, say, the first Monday and Tuesday in the month so that we may know definitely and I would try to adjust my programme accordingly. That would be better.

Usha Nath Sen: We are very grateful to you for the suggestion but we should like to have some sort of a brief from you because there may be occasions on which the Prime Minister may like to make pronouncements and important statements.

JN: But that would be a special conference.

2. The Deadlock in Kashmir¹

...The whole point of a reconsideration of the position by the Security Council

1. Note on Kashmir, 4 December 1949. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol.I, pp. 311-313. Extracts.

is that a way might be found out of the present deadlock.² If a mediator has to be appointed, then he must have full authority to explore every possible avenue which might lead to a settlement. He must not be bound by what has taken place previously. Of course, he will no doubt take into consideration past history and the resolutions of the Security Council and the Commission. But, otherwise he should be given a free hand. Arbitration should be ruled out completely.

We cannot rule out a plebiscite, however impracticable it may have become.

Thus our objective should be to get broader and briefer terms of reference for the single mediator. The mediator, should be instructed, with due regard to the resolutions of the Council and the Commission, to suggest a just and peaceful settlement of the dispute over Kashmir, taking into account the present situation in all its aspects, and the basic facts of history, geography, language and culture of the state.³

2. On 5 December 1949, the U.N. Commission on India and Pakistan recommended that (i) the Security Council enjoin the two Governments to observe the ceasefire and abstain from any measure which would augment tension in the state; (ii) the demilitarization problem should be tackled as a whole to bring about a synchronized withdrawal of all forces; (iii) the appointment of a single individual as the U.N. representative to endeavour to bring the two Governments together on all unresolved issues; and (iv) the consultation by the Council with the two Governments to decide the terms of reference of its representative including his authority to arbitrate on issues of demilitarization.
3. India accepted the recommendations with certain reservations. It accepted the termination of the U.N.C.I.P. and the idea of the appointment of a single representative for mediation in regard to the problem of demilitarization, but not the Council's broad outline of the scheme. It was also made clear by B.N. Rau that the U.N. representative would be appointed with the agreement of the parties.

3. Canada and the Kashmir Issue¹

Thank you for your message which has been conveyed to me by the Canadian High Commissioner. I appreciate your interest in Kashmir dispute. We are eager for a settlement, but certain factors have come in the way of such a settlement which I endeavoured to explain to you. We do not wish any public discussion of

1. Message to Canadian Minister for External Affairs, New Delhi, 29 December 1949. J.N. Collection.

this issue, if it can be avoided. Hence our original suggestion for a mediator. But if public discussion does take place, then it is impossible to hide obvious and important facts. I understand that our Delegation at Lake Success has suggested certain amendments to General McNaughton's proposals.²

We have always attached great importance to the moral aspect of Kashmir issue³ and we are convinced that ignoring of this has added to difficulties of settlement. Throughout our discussions with Commission and in our published correspondence we have laid stress on this. No just or durable decision can be arrived at unless premises are sound. We do not desire any condemnation of Pakistan, but at the same time we cannot accept statements made which ignore realities of the situation. Bajpai will no doubt explain fully our position to you.

I am looking forward to meeting you in Colombo. Kind regards.

2. General McNaughton submitted the following proposals to the two Governments on 22 December, with regard to demilitarization: (1) The withdrawal of regular forces of Pakistan and of those of India not required for security and for law and order, (2) the reduction of local forces by disbanding and disarming, including the armed forces of Kashmir and the 'Azad' forces, (3) The northern areas to be included in such a scheme of demilitarization, the civil administration of which was to continue to be vested in the existing local authorities subject to U.N. supervision. India suggested two far-reaching amendments to the proposal and thus, in effect, rejected it. These were: (a) only 'Azad' forces should be disbanded; (b) the defence and administration of the northern areas should be vested in India and the Kashmir government respectively. Pakistan accepted the proposal with only minor reservations.
3. As stated by India, the moral issue in Kashmir was not a matter of Hindus and Muslims. India was a secular State with equal political freedom for all; and a large majority of Kashmiris were in favour of accession to India. Again, India's commitment to plebiscite was self-imposed; if India did not want it, there was nothing to compel her, since accession was completed by the signatures on the Instrument of Accession. Trouble arose in Kashmir not out of accession but out of invasion. It was incomprehensible why pressure should always be brought to bear on India to acquiesce in the wrong, and why some pressure should not be brought to bear on the other side to acquiesce in the right on the same grounds.

4. To B.N. Rau¹

New Delhi

January 17, 1950

My dear B.N.,

We have been communicating by telegram in regard to Kashmir, but I have not sent you any letter. I have been myself away at Colombo. Bajpai, I understand, is returning in a day or two and presumably Shaikh Abdullah will follow.

1. J.N. Collection.

Our position in regard to the Kashmir issue before the United Nations however difficult is a clear one. The latest exchange of messages between Acheson and we has, I hope, made it clear to the State Department what we think of their intervention. Acheson's message to me was, even apart from the merits of the question, highly objectionable. It surprises me that the State Department is so immature in its thinking that it should imagine that a message of that kind should incline us to their way of thinking. We may sometimes agree to a suggestion made in a friendly way. But anything in the nature of a threat can only have one reaction from us that is one of resentment and opposition.

In any event, our course of action is clear now. If the matter comes up before the Security Council, you will deal with the origins of this dispute and not allow yourself to be entangled in subsequent developments. We must not permit another by-passing of the basic issues. We are not prepared to agree to any further negotiations with McNaughton or indeed any further negotiations at Lake Success.

So far as I am concerned, the scene of interests shifts to India and what happens in the Security Council, though no doubt important, does not move me greatly. I am sick and tired of the attitude that the U.K. and U.S.A. Governments have been taking in this matter.

There is one matter which has caused me a great deal of uneasiness and I think I must write to you about it. My impression is that there has been a lack of cooperation between you and the Indian Embassy in Washington. So far as I know our Embassy in Washington has not interfered with your work in any way. But for some odd reason that I do not understand there has been a continuous stress on petty matters of status and the rest of it. Even before I went to America Shiva Rao wrote some curious letters to us here. When I was in America, Shiva Rao wrote to me a letter which amazed me. Whether his letters represent you in any way or not, I do not know. I wrote back to him that he appeared to be suffering from some kind of a complex or other.

Now I gather that ever since Bajpai has gone there, there has been some kind of barrier between you and him. Your telegrams about India's representation on the Security Council, whether legally correct or not, disturbed me because they seemed to lay stress on some kind of personal factor. I understand further that you have prepared your speech for the Security Council on the Kashmir issue and have not shown it to Bajpai and that you seldom consult him about your talks with other members of the Security Council regarding Kashmir. All this appears to me rather strange. I do not take any step regarding Kashmir without constant consultation with my colleagues. Bajpai has been dealing with this matter throughout and it is for this reason that we took trouble to send him there. Apparently, his presence there was not fully utilised. Certainly he has been made to feel that he was not particularly wanted.

I am writing to you about this as I feel that you should know how disturbed I have been by these personal equations coming into our work which must

necessarily suffer because of them. As Bajpai is coming back soon, this issue does not arise now. But it may arise again and again and we should be clear about it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Telegram to B.N. Rau¹

Your telegram No. 28 of 18th January. Entirely agree with you that you should explain our attitude fully before Security Council.² Most of our troubles are due to people not knowing or forgetting beginnings of this dispute. India's rights in Kashmir may be perhaps arguable but from no conceivable viewpoint has Pakistan any right to be there with its armies. Fact of aggression must be stressed as also false denial of it till found out. Indeed we should have been justified in claiming heavy compensation for damage caused.

1. New Delhi, 19 January 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. B.N. Rau reported on 19 January that the meeting of the Security Council scheduled for 20 January, had been suddenly cancelled at the instance of the U.S.

6. To B.N. Rau¹

New Delhi
February 14, 1950

My dear B.N.,

...I must say that I just cannot understand the attitude of U.K. and U.S.A.² about Kashmir. As you say, there appears to be an almost invincible prejudice against India. We have tried to explain our position in the greatest detail to both the U.K. and U.S.A. people. I have done it, you have done it, Bajpai has done it, and so many other people. There is no doubt that they know the facts and yet in spite of them and for some entirely extraneous reasons they go on with their own anti-India attitude. The U.K. has become a little quiet during the last few weeks. The U.S.A. has probably also realised that it went a little too far in threatening us with consequences. Henderson here almost apologised for his Government's attitude

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. On 30 August 1949, President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee, through formal notes to India and Pakistan, had suggested that the Kashmir issue should be settled by arbitration by an eminent person appointed by the United Nations—Admiral Nimitz. Reaction in India against this proposal was sharp and instantaneous. See *Selected Works*, (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 219-223.

and said it was wrong and they knew nothing about it. In a day or two Jessup³ is coming here. We shall, no doubt, discuss Kashmir and other matters.

The whole Kashmir issue is apparently tied up in the American mind with Russia, China, Indo-China, and the rest of it. I am quite sure that the policy the U.S.A. and U.K. are adopting in Indo-China is wrong and will lead to evil consequences. I cannot help their policy, but I see no reason to fall in line with a policy which I consider absolutely wrong. All these people seem to be in a jittery condition because of developments in China and they have lost their sense of balance and perspective.

Sir William Barton's article⁴ in the *Foreign Affairs* as well as the *New York Times* effusions⁵ were poisonous in the extreme. Most people know what Barton stands for, but American readers probably know nothing about Barton and his background.

Colban⁶ has been here for some days and I am seeing him this afternoon. Bajpai has also met him. I do not know what to suggest to you about Kashmir, as you are in full possession of all the facts and our views.

The position in India vis-a-vis Pakistan has deteriorated, chiefly as a consequence of the economic war. During the last few days there has been a great deal of trouble in East Bengal on the one side and Calcutta on the other. To some extent the situation is under control now, but it is difficult to be sure about the future. The fact is that we live continually perched up on the top of a volcano because of the inner and basic conflicts with Pakistan. This conflict is really a continuation of the old conflict

3. Philip C. Jessup, President Truman's roving ambassador, visited India in the last week of February 1950. He held talks with Indian officials and denied that the U.S. was seeking bases in Kashmir and Nepal.
4. In January 1950, the American quarterly, *Foreign Affairs*, carried an article by Sir William Barton, who was for 35 years a member of the Indian Civil Service and a British Resident in three important States, which supported the Pakistani position. The writer stated that (i) from the viewpoints of population and geography Kashmir was a part of Pakistan; (ii) Abdullah was Nehru's protegee; (iii) India would need an army of occupation to hold Kashmir; (iv) India was becoming economically weak and politically unstable, a morass out of which a lasting peace with Pakistan was the only escape; (v) Pakistan had on the whole a sound financial position and politically she was "in smoother waters than her great neighbour". The task was to "induce Pandit Nehru and his government to be less uncompromising," and a new approach could be to give most of Kashmir to Pakistan, leaving a part of Jammu, south of Chenab, for India.
5. *The New York Times* wrote: "India seized Hyderabad because it was racially an overwhelmingly Hindu state with a Muslim prince; she is claiming Kashmir, an overwhelming Mohammedan state racially, because the Hindu ruler signed an instrument of accession to India. It looks like getting the best of both the worlds... If India is in good faith she will accept U.N. mediation."
6. Erik Colban (1876-1956); Norwegian diplomat; Personal Representative of Secretary General of U.N. with the Commission for India and Pakistan, 1948-49; diplomatic adviser to the U.N. Representative on Kashmir, 1950.

with the Muslim League which brought about Pakistan and I do not see any end to it for some considerable time to come.

About China and the Security Council, our position is quite clear and logical.⁷ Having recognised the new Government in China we cannot support the Kuomintang representative. If the matter comes up in the Security Council, we must vote positively for the inclusion of a representative of the new Chinese Government. At the same time, there is no reason why we should take the lead in any of these matters. The real difficulty has been caused by the U.S.A.'s attitude and partly the U.K.'s. If Trygve Lie wants to get out of it, he should approach the U.S.A. and U.K. and not expect us to take the initiative.

Thank you for what you have written in answer to certain remarks of mine about what I suspected to be some lack of cooperation among our representatives. I wrote to you because I wanted to put frankly what I had in mind. My reason for thinking so was not any complaint from Bajpai or Vijayalakshmi. Vijayalakshmi did not mention the matter to me at all. Bajpai wrote from Lake Success that he felt there was not enough cooperation. There was not much in this. What made me attach some importance to it was Shiva Rao's previous attitude. Shiva Rao wrote to us once or twice before I went to America and twice while I was in the United States. I was astonished to read his letters. I felt quite sure that you would not feel that way, but there was a chance of Shiva Rao's views perhaps influencing you. I am glad to learn that you did not know anything about Shiva Rao's letters.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. India's position was based on the *de facto* theory of recognition of governments in international law, which holds that new governments should be recognized as soon as they are in control of the state "without going into the nature of that government". This was the policy which the United States usually adhered to during the period from 1793 down to 1921.

7. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Bajpai has already sent you a telegram about Bengal situation. I should like you to appreciate that this is very critical and passions are running high. From all accounts what has occurred is bad enough but unconfirmed reports exaggerate

1. New Delhi, 26 February 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

greatly. Kashmir problem has become quite secondary in this context. The prospect of vast numbers of people migrating is terrible to contemplate. Indeed many are coming over in spite of obstruction. Attitude of U.K. and U.S.A. in Kashmir problem makes general situation even worse and greatly irritates people here.

8. To S. Radhakrishnan¹

New Delhi
March 5, 1950

My dear Radhakrishnan,

I have just received your letter of the 24th February.² We might certainly carry on conversations about the proposed Indo-Soviet Pact of Friendship.³ But, just at the present moment, we appear to have fallen out with the Western group because of various recent happenings.⁴ In our disputes with Pakistan, the whole western world lines up with Pakistan and criticises us for our imperialist designs. Such is the world. Meanwhile, the situation vis-a-vis Pakistan is very critical, more especially because of developments in East Bengal. It has reached such a stage of crisis that a continuation at this level for long is unlikely. It must either blow up or tone down.

On the Kashmir issue in the Security Council, the U.K., the U.S.A. and others form a solid phalanx against us. The U.K. representative has taken the lead in this opposition to us. The Soviet representative has of course been absent.⁵ Our attitude regarding Indo-China has deeply hurt the U.K. and the U.S.A. I am convinced that our attitude is the right one and I see no reason to change it in the slightest.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Radhakrishnan had written about his conversation with the delegates to the National Peace Council. A conference at top level was seriously being considered both in Britain and America. He made it clear that "such a conference to be successful should include you and Mao Tse-tung. This information has been conveyed to Mr. Churchill."
3. Radhakrishnan had written that he was waiting to hear from Bajpai details of the proposed Indo-Soviet Pact of Friendship. He felt that "such pacts with other countries and membership of the Commonwealth of Nations is itself a Pact of Friendship with Great Britain. In the circumstances we shall only demonstrate to the world that we are anxious to get on well with all the chief powers."
4. See also *post*, p. 543.
5. The Soviet representative at the U.N., withdrew from the Security Council (and later from almost all other U.N. organisations one by one) on 10 January 1950, stating that the Soviet Government would not take part in the Council's work until "suitable measures" had been taken to remove the Chinese Nationalist delegation. Their boycott of the Security Council ended in August 1950 when the Soviet representative assumed the presidency of the Security Council.

All this has led to this growing estrangement between us and the western countries, though, of course, superficially our relations are quite friendly. We have been faced with what can only be called threats. We do not propose to give in to a threat anyhow from wherever it may come. In regard to the Kashmir and the Indo-China matter also we shall hold to our position.

In view of all this, we might go a little slow in taking further and obvious steps towards closer relations with the Soviet. Circumstances, and these include the attitude of the U.S.A. and the U.K., are pushing us in that direction. For the present it should be a safer policy not to undertake any additional step which might make our relations with the western powers worse. Probably the next few months will bring many developments which would vitally affect our future.

I am going to Calcutta tomorrow for a few days. The situation there is explosive, because of the stories of what has happened in East Pakistan and the large number of refugees which continue to pour in. It has become impossible to remain quiet or even just to protest. I cannot indicate here what immediate developments might be. But things are moving fast. It is impossible to contemplate 12 million people walking across from East Bengal to West Bengal. And yet not a single Hindu in East Bengal has any sense of security and he lives in continuous apprehension of what the next day might bring to him. Hindu morale in East Bengal is completely shattered.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. Cable to S.M. Abdullah¹

Security Council have suggested Sir Owen Dixon's² name for mediator. No other names suggested. Formal meeting of Council probably on eleventh. Dixon is justice of High Court of Australia and has high reputation for independence, integrity and ability. People, who have known him personally well think highly of him, strongly recommend our accepting him. No other choice likely to be better. In view of all circumstances we think we should accept him. Hope you agree.

1. New Delhi, 6 April 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. (1886-1972); Judge, High Court of Australia, 1929-52 and Chief Justice, 1952-64; United Nations mediator in Kashmir dispute, 1950.

REHABILITATION OF REFUGEES

1. To Mohanlal Saksena¹

New Delhi
November 18, 1949

My dear Mohanlal,

I received a note for the Cabinet Committee from your Ministry about stoppage of permanent permits or the conversion of temporary permits into permanent permits.² I must say that I entirely disagreed with the argument. We are doing something which is contrary to all international procedure and custom. We are mixing up property rights with the rights of movements to individuals. The latter is a well-known right which we cannot easily override. It is true that in the special circumstances prevailing as between India and Pakistan, we have had to take certain measures. We cannot add to them by limiting our own power to do something which we may consider necessary. It is open to us to restrict the exercise of that power, but to limit it absolutely means distrust of our own selves, apart from laying down a principle which is inherently wrong.

I am very busy at present, but after a few days I should like to have a talk with you and Mehr Chand Khanna about the general refugee situation.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. When Pakistan did not respond to the Indian proposal for a planned movement of population, the Government of India announced on 8 July 1948 the introduction of a permit system to regulate the return of Indian Muslims who had earlier migrated to Pakistan for permanent settlement in India. An order was issued on 21 July 1948 specifying these restrictions which would apply to other communities also but would not affect short visits for business and other purposes.

2. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
December 2, 1949

My dear Bidhan,

Thank you for your letter of the 1st December.² You are right in pointing out that I should have used the word loan and not grant.

1. *With Dr. B.C. Roy and other Chief Ministers* by Saroj Chakrabarty, pp. 143-144.
2. B.C. Roy wrote that the central grant received for rehabilitation for the years from 1948 to 1950 was a little more than Rs. 3 crores, while the remaining Rs. 5 crores was a loan. The grant was insignificant considering that 16 lakh displaced persons from East Bengal got only Rs. 20 per head spread over two years.

as Faridabad, where an effort has been made not only to provide work but also to apply the human touch, we should not do anything which affects this process of real rehabilitation...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To Mohanlal Saksena¹

New Delhi
February 5, 1950

My dear Mohanlal,

Rafi Ahmed has sent me a copy of a letter he has addressed to you. It seems to me that if the facts, as stated by Rafi Ahmed, are correct, then we must revise such cases. We must always remember that normally people have full freedom to travel or settle down in different countries, even when they are not very friendly to each other. India's relations with Pakistan are very peculiar at present. Hence special rules and regulations have been made. But these rules and regulations should not be interpreted in a way which is entirely opposed to all international practice. A few odd persons coming in will not make any difference to India. But a single person kept out unjustly does make a difference.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

5. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
28 February 1950

My dear Bidhan,

Your Governor has sent me a copy of the report of a conference held in Government House on the 27th February,² where you, Sita Ram and others were present. I have just read it. My immediate reactions are, in regard to the short-term and long-term plans, as follows:

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Sita Ram, Indian High Commissioner in Karachi and S.K. Basu had toured the disturbed areas of East Bengal. They said that since the trouble in Dhaka on 10 February, widespread arson, loot and murder were reported there and the minority community was eager to come away at the earliest.

We have inevitably to receive and make arrangements for the refugees who come over.³ Nevertheless we must not encourage this. I am therefore not in favour of our High Commissioner maintaining large camps for this purpose. He will have to give some help. The whole question depends on what we are aiming at. I am entirely opposed to the idea that the only solution will be exchange of populations or a complete evacuation of the Hindu minorities. This is not a question of my opinion. I am definite that it is impossible, whatever people may think. If this is impossible, then it should not be considered as a possibility and no question of working up to that end arises.

It is true that the whole conception of an Islamic State, which Pakistan has, makes it hardly possible for Hindus to live there in security. But then that conception is wrong and will have to go, not that millions of Hindus should walk out of East Bengal.

I think it is most important that we should be clear in our minds about this business. There can be no mass evacuation and no exchange of populations, whatever else happens. Negatively, that is the only long-term policy that we can follow. But long term and short term at the present moment cannot be separated. Or to put it differently, there can be no long-term policy, because of the present crisis. Long-term policies are evolved, not when the situation changes from day to day and week to week. I think that the Hindu Mahasabha is, as usual, making a great mistake in making these suggestions and we shall fall into a trap by encouraging them. We would in fact play into the hands of Pakistan. It often happens that the Muslim communalist and the Hindu communalist by diverse routes, arrive at the same conclusion. Probably the Hindu Mahasabha people suggest this simply in order to create a major conflict between India and Pakistan. If a conflict has got to come anyhow, then it will be faced. There is no reason why we should encourage a step which itself is wrong and yet have a conflict.

The fact that we are passing through a continued crisis, itself should make us wary of coming to any swift decision about the future. The present position should be that the East Bengal Government (and also the West Bengal Government) should guarantee compensation and rehabilitation to the sufferers and to those who have gone away and should punish the guilty. They should further undertake to recover abducted women and not to recognise forcible conversions. Whether they agree to do so or not, or whether having agreed, they fail to do so, is a question that has to be considered in its proper context then...

Yours,
Jawaharlal

3. Up to 31 March 1950, 8,23,000 Hindus had crossed over from East Bengal to India. Of these 6,43,000 went to West Bengal, 80,000 to Assam and 1,00,000 to Tripura.

I do not know what the expenditure incurred on relief and rehabilitation has been for those coming from West Pakistan. Probably you are right in saying that it has been far more than that for refugees from East Pakistan. That surely has not been because of any desire to differentiate, but rather because of certain overwhelming factors. About half a million people came from western Pakistan to India even before partition. We gave them no help at all. Then came a flood of about five to six million people in the course roughly of two months. There was something elemental about this and we had to come out to face this situation. In eastern Pakistan the migration has been at a lower pace and rather gradual. In West Pakistan practically all Hindus or Sikhs have been driven out. In East Pakistan a very large number remained and it was your policy and ours not to do anything which might bring about a wholesale migration to West Bengal from eastern Pakistan. This would have led to tremendous misery and to a problem which hardly any Government would have been able to face.

Another question arises about the actual relief and rehabilitation measures taken in West Bengal for these refugees. Money actually sent to you as grant or loan has largely not been spent yet for rehabilitation.

I cannot here enter into any argument about the income tax and jute tax and allotments.³ This matter, as you know, has been repeatedly considered. Nor would it serve any useful purpose to argue about the failings of the Central Government. We have all our own views about our failings and our successes both at the Centre and in the provinces. It does not help much to accuse each other. The Working Committee were firmly convinced that the West Bengal problem required a certain psychological approach and made certain recommendations.⁴ Many of these proposals have not been acted upon there.

I am sending copies of your letter to my colleagues here for their opinion.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

3. B.C. Roy had pointed out that after partition West Bengal had to start with a deficit balance of Rs. 2.5 crores unpaid at that time. He said that the Centre had taken away part of their share of income tax and jute tax earnings. While the income tax had mostly been distributed among other provinces, the jute tax share of Bengal had been appropriated by the Centre.
4. See *ante*, pp. 173-174.

3. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi
January 7, 1950

My dear Rajendra Babu,²

...All this business of rehabilitation, during the last two years, has been looked upon too much as a mechanical process, as if we were dealing with chattels and not with human beings possessing minds and spirit, which have passed through a period of terrible abnormality and have to be made normal again. There are of course some very fine exceptions and the Rehabilitation Ministry as well as other agencies have done very good work in some places. But generally speaking, the problem is too big, and we were overwhelmed and could not deal with it in the human way that was so necessary.

In any event we wanted to do it in a somewhat different way in Faridabad³ and fortunately we attracted a number of fine workers to help us. The cooperative movement, which is new but which has been full of enthusiasm, came on the scene and we encouraged it because we thought it worthwhile from the rehabilitation point of view. We brought Asha Devi and others and they have been a great source of comfort to us as well as to the refugees.⁴ It would be very sad, if this element was progressively reduced and the whole thing deteriorated merely to building houses and the rest of it.

I do not know the details of what has been decided, if anything has been finally decided. But I do hope that the special element which we have encouraged in Faridabad will not be allowed to suffer in any way.

But above everything, it must be clearly understood by all concerned that 4000 houses (as they are euphemistically called) must be ready by June. I am afraid this time element is not always appreciated and repeatedly excuses are brought forward for something not having been done during the time stipulated for it.

In a large number of camps we have simply proceeded to shut them up and allowed people to shift for themselves without making adequate provisions for work centres, as we had decided long ago. It was inevitable for us to close the camps because we could not afford to keep them going and camp life on doles was harmful to all concerned. Nevertheless, it does us little credit, if we could not organise some kind of work or work centres during all this long period, even though that work was not economic in the ordinary sense of the word. At any rate in such places

1. File No.29(197)/50-PMS. Extracts.
2. Rajendra Prasad was also the Chairman of Faridabad Township Development Board at this time.
3. Faridabad was one of the nineteen full-fledged viable townships built by the Central Government in the western region, equipped with schools, hospitals, shopping centres, industrial sites and provided with all civil amenities. Faridabad was designed as a complex of medium and small scale industries.
4. E.W. Aryanayakam and his wife Asha Devi came to organise basic education for refugee children at Faridabad.

6. Coordination of Relief Work¹

There are a number of organizations working for relief or allied work in Calcutta at present. It is important that this work should be coordinated and should not conflict or overlap...

It was with this object in view that the Bengal Centre of the United Council of Relief and Welfare was formed about a few days ago and many of the relief organizations have joined it. The Governor is the Chairman of this Centre and the West Bengal Government is also represented upon it. There should be, and I believe there is, full cooperation between the West Bengal Government and the U.C.R.W. here.

If separate relief organizations deal directly with the Government or with the different departments of Government, there will be confusion and sometimes contradictory policies might be followed. Therefore, it is desirable that all approaches to Government should be made through the U.C.R.W....

So far as I know, the Congress organization for relief, functioning under the B.P.C.C. and the Peace Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr P.C. Ghosh, have not yet associated themselves with the U.C.R.W. This should be done to facilitate work and promote coordination. The Peace Committee, as well as the Congress Relief Organization, not only should help in relief but work for the preservation of a calm and peaceful atmosphere. They work both among Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta and it is important that such work should not be confined to any one group or community. They should continue this work but where any kind of executive or other action is necessary involving Government, including enquiries from Government, the procedure should be to go through the Secretary to the Governor, representing the U.C.R.W., and he will deal with the necessary Government department....

The question has arisen about the Muslim evacuees in Calcutta and elsewhere. West Bengal Government have issued a notification to the effect that rations will be stopped and complaints have come about this. It is clear that from every point of view the Muslim evacuees must return to their houses or to other huts or houses prepared for them, and must not remain in camps as far as possible. The longer they remain in camps the more difficult it becomes to return to normality and the burden of the Government to feed them is also great.

On the other hand, Government cannot ask them to return to some place which is not safe and where there is no protection. Therefore, the Government has to

1. Note to B.C. Roy, S.M. Ghosh, P.C. Ghosh and Mridula Sarabhai, Calcutta, 16 March 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

provide accommodation and protection to those who leave the camps. Primarily, they should go back to their own houses. Secondly, they might go into other Muslims' houses which might be lying vacant or to huts, etc. erected for them or repaired. If they go to others houses this will be on the understanding that if the owner wants to come back, they will have to move elsewhere. Government will necessarily give protection in those localities.

Empty houses are a continuing source of trouble, more especially when large numbers of refugees come to Calcutta. An empty house may be looted or burnt or occupied without authority. Therefore, it is important that empty houses should not remain empty. I do not understand why the Muslim evacuees refuse to go back to their or other houses provided for them. Of course, they have a right to expect protection. Government will arrange for this....

If Government lay down the policy to send back the Muslim evacuees to their or other houses under protection and stop rations to those who are meant to go back, then it is not right for any relief organization to go counter to that policy in any way. In the application of that policy, of course, injustice might be done and attention should be drawn to this by the organization or the individual who sees it. This work of relief in a critical and developing situation requires a very great deal of coordination and tact and a spirit of forbearance....

7. To Mohanlal Saksena¹

New Delhi
March 25, 1950

My dear Mohanlal,

As you are going to West Bengal etc., I hope you will keep in mind the vast extent of the problem we have to deal with. There is no limit to this and we just cannot run away from it or express our inability to deal with it. We have taken this unlimited responsibility. This is a direct responsibility. It is clear that we must have the help of all other provinces.² It is also clear that these other provinces, even though they agree to help, will not be very eager to do so. Therefore, in regard to arrangements in other provinces also like Bihar, Orissa, and U.P. the responsibility is ours.

1. File No.29(96)/50-PMS. Extracts.

2. At a conference held in July 1948, a quota of displaced persons was fixed for each State and separate schemes for resettlement outlined. The Central Government defrayed practically the entire expenditure on displaced persons and planned the gradual movement of large numbers of men, women and children from the camps to their new homes.

Dr Roy telephoned to me last night that most urgent steps must be taken to remove the East Bengal refugees to other provinces; otherwise the whole of Calcutta and round about will be submerged by this flood. He mentioned that Rao³ had been carrying on some discussions about the rate of payment to other refugees in other provinces. It is obvious that we cannot delay matters, because some details have not been decided. The matter is most urgent and people must be sent away to Bihar and Orissa specially immediately and daily. All details can be settled later, if necessary...

About Assam a further difficulty arises as the Assam Government is very non-cooperative. We shall have to examine it ourselves very carefully. It must be made perfectly clear to the Assam Government that in this matter the Central Government cannot simply wait because the situation is too urgent. It is inevitable that the people who go to Assam from East Bengal have to be accommodated there for the present at least. They cannot be sent elsewhere and they cannot be pushed back into East Bengal. Therefore, there is no choice about it. If they have to be accommodated in Assam, this must be done adequately and properly, otherwise they will upset the whole economy of Assam and law and order problems of the greatest magnitude will arise. A non-cooperative attitude or dilatory tactics will not help the Assam Government at all, but will add to their difficulties. For your private information I might say that if things are not arranged properly, the Central Government may take even more direct charge of the situation in any particular place.

Another important matter arises in regard to Assam. The new jute crop has to be sown soon. The Muslim cultivators have largely gone. We cannot possibly take the risk of losing this crop. Who is to do it then? Most of the Assamese are not good cultivators and will not be capable of taking full advantage of this opportunity. Inevitably we have to rely on the Bengal cultivators who are coming over to Assam. These people know jute cultivation and can easily be put to it. This will also help to some extent in dealing with the rehabilitation. Of course any arrangement made must be temporary for this crop or so.⁴ Permanent arrangements will depend on many factors. This is not exactly your charge. Nevertheless, now that you are going there you should press this point and explain it to your officers too. The Agriculture Ministry will independently deal with it also.

3. A branch secretariat of the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Government of India, had been set up and B.G. Rao, a Joint Secretary, was in charge with headquarters at Calcutta. This secretariat was responsible for relief operations in West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Orissa and Tripura in respect of new arrivals from East Bengal.
4. Nehru had also suggested to Bardoloi immediate employment of East Bengal refugees on a temporary basis in jute cultivation which had been badly hit by the exodus of Muslim cultivators from Goalpara and adjacent areas to East Bengal.

Another question which has to be borne in mind is that owing to the vast influx of refugees it seems to be desirable that military help should be taken in organising them....

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. To Gopinath Bardoloi¹

New Delhi
6 April 1950

My dear Bardoloi,

I sent you two telegrams² in rapid succession about the refugee relief and rehabilitation problem and, in particular, about immediate steps being taken for jute cultivation. I have received your telegrams in reply³ and I am glad that your Government is taking active interest in these matters. There is no question of my giving credence to interested propaganda against your Government and its officers. I do not know who you refer to. But the fact is that your Government has moved rather slowly and reluctantly in a matter of the most vital and urgent importance. Also that your Government or some members of it have a certain dislike for Bengalis coming in large numbers to Assam. I understand that feeling and I am prepared to make allowances for it. But the crisis and the problem before us are much too big for us to be swept out of our course by any minor considerations. If we do not face this crisis as an all-India problem and do not have the fullest cooperation from State Governments, then we are all likely to fail, whether in the Centre or in the States. The matter is far too serious for any limitations to be put to the work in hand or any arguments to be advanced, which loses significance when we see the scale of the problem.

Mohanlal Saksena, our Rehabilitation Minister, has just been paying you a visit. His report was not very satisfactory in regard to the conditions he found there.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. For the first telegram dated 2 April 1950 see *ante*, p. 167. Nehru repeated his concern for the delay in jute crop cultivation in a telegram on 4 April (not printed). He sent Rajeshwar Dayal, a senior officer, to help Bardoloi in this matter.

3. On 3 April, Bardoloi informed Nehru that the limiting factors for jute cultivation were extremely short time, want of enough cultivators and necessary wherewithal. On 6 April he stated that his Rehabilitation Minister, in charge of Finance also, was dealing with the situation in Goalpara as desired by Nehru. Bardoloi requested him not to give credence to interested propaganda against the State Government.

In particular, I was unhappy to learn of the fate of a proposal he had made to have a kind of emergency council with the Governor and Ministers in it to deal with these problems. Some kind of a council has been approved of, I believe, but this is a truncated and ineffective affair, which cannot do much. I was surprised to learn of the arguments advanced against his proposal. Those arguments showed that the problem had not been understood or appreciated fully.

Nobody wants to overwhelm Assam with refugees from Bengal or elsewhere. But for the present it is inevitable that people who go direct from Bengal to Assam should be looked after and provided for, for the present at least. There is no help for it and there is no other way out. The question of numbers even does not arise. Numbers depend on the people who cross the border to Assam of their own volition and not because of us. Therefore all these persons have to be received and cared for. What happens to them subsequently is another matter and we shall have to give careful thought to it. It is possible that the migrants may return home, or some of them at least. If not, then they may be removed to other parts of India.

It is difficult at present to say what policy we shall have to pursue for any length of time, because much depends on coming events. If we come to an agreement with Pakistan, as we are trying to do, that will no doubt relieve the tension somewhat and lessen these migrations. They may also lead people to go back to their homes. We shall have to consider all these matters from time to time and take decisions accordingly. For the present we carry on. This carrying on means not only looking after the migrants who have come over, but means arrangements for the next jute crop. In your telegram you said that you only expected 50 per cent of it.⁴ That will be a severe blow and I see no reason why we should have a lesser production than is usual. There is the land and there are the trained people and the resources of the Government of India are placed at their disposal. Why then a low production?

In this matter of refugees from East Bengal, whether in West Bengal or Assam or Tripura, the Government of India have assumed full and unlimited responsibilities, both financially and administratively. We have done so, not because we are overflowing with money or with trained personnel, but because we just had to do it....

With reference to Mohanlal Saksena's proposal to you about the formation of a council with the Governor as Chairman, I am reminded of how we dealt with the Delhi situation two and a half years ago. The whole of Punjab was in a state of eruption and Delhi itself was caught in this upheaval. The situation was dangerous in the extreme. We could not deal with it effectively by the normal governmental methods, which take time. We therefore formed an Emergency Council with Mountbatten as its Chairman. The Members of the Council were some Ministers, some of our principal officers concerned, a few representatives of relief organisations

4. The Director of Agriculture had estimated that jute production would fall by fifty per cent.

and representatives of the military and police. This Council met every morning at Government House at 10 o'clock and considered the situation. We had a map room with the latest information and maps and charts. Every problem was discussed briefly and orders were issued on the spot without long noting on files or references to various Ministries and Departments. The next morning a report had to be made by those concerned about the implementation of the orders of the previous day. So from day to day we worked in this manner, as if we were the headquarters conducting a war campaign. I have no doubt that that manner of working speeded up all our activities and helped us to control the situation rapidly.

This Emergency Council that we had with Mountbatten as Chairman, had no executive powers, but people who were present there had the authority to issue directions. The Council did not take away any powers from the Ministries, as the Ministers themselves were present, and if any matter was decided, it had necessarily their concurrence and orders were issued immediately. If they did not approve, then something else was thought about.

Because of this experience that I had, I became convinced that some such machinery of decision and implementation, rather on war-time lines, was effective in dealing with a dynamic situation. I was therefore glad to learn that Mohanlal Saksena had suggested something rather like it. I regret that it was not approved and I regret still further the reasons given for its rejection.

Something of this kind is being done in Calcutta now and the Governor goes daily to attend meetings of Ministers and high officials in Writers Building.

I would like you, therefore, to reconsider this matter and to have an emergency council of the kind I have suggested. In particular, take such work as you can from your Governor and who, I am sure, will be able to help a great deal in this way. Such a council must sit from day to day for a little while in the morning or afternoon and decide then and there what steps should be taken. Higher policies will of course be decided by your Government or by the Central Government. But the council can make any recommendation it likes.

The matter of cultivation is, I repeat, of the highest importance. No land must lie fallow and experienced cultivators must be put in charge of it. This should be done without commitment for the future. The Central Government is intimately involved in all this and may have to take many additional steps. An emergency has to be met by emergency methods.

It is my intention to visit Assam, more especially because of these new problems that have arisen. But I cannot say when I shall be able to come.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

I. Perspectives

1. The Need to Industrialize India¹

Mr Chancellor, Mr Vice-Chancellor, Mr Premier² and Members and Graduates of this University:

....We talk a great deal about progress in India, about developments, about projects and schemes. Everyone is talking about planning or scheming some way or other, good or bad, and yet everybody, of course, agrees that we have got to industrialize India and we have got to have big river valley projects, and more science and more application of science. There is a great deal of agreement, and yet the picture seems to be entirely confused in spite of all this talk, and I speak not only in my personal capacity, but as Prime Minister of this country. What surprises me is that there is so much talk about this, each person talks in his own way, sings his own tune. There is no attempt at unified thinking or at coordination of the thoughts of various groups of people or individuals. Every individual thinks in his own way. I do not find coordination in any part of India, between the provinces and the Centre, or if I may say so, among different departments of the Government. Some of our provinces behave and think almost as if they were independent countries, not really of course, but in their conduct, they seem to think that they must develop independent of the rest of the country. They must have everything to make them more or less self-sufficient, whether it is easily possible for them or not. They do not think of development in India as one coordinated whole. If we want something, and we get something in the United Provinces, which will supply the needs of India, then it is not necessary for the province of Bihar or Bombay to have it, provided it supplies the other needs of India. Otherwise the result obviously would be that many things are done, many institutions, business and industries started in different parts which overlap, which do not yield as much fruit as they should, and there is wastage of national energy and effort.

We all know that our resources have tremendous potential in every way, including manpower which can easily be trained. Nevertheless, our present resources are limited, financial resources or resources in the shape of skilled manpower. If they are limited, obviously, we cannot do all that we want to do. We may add to our financial resources by borrowing money from abroad or in the country. We may get help in the shape of technical advice from abroad and obviously we have to rely fundamentally on ourselves. Our resources are at the present moment

1. Convocation Address at Roorkee University, 25 November 1949, A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L. Extracts.
2. Homi Mody, the Governor of U.P. was the Chancellor, A.C. Hart, the Vice-Chancellor, and Govind Ballabh Pant, the Premier.

relatively limited. If they are limited, we have to think how to utilize them best, not to waste them, because if we waste them, it means we do not do something that we consider important.

In spite of this obvious fact that we hold, there is so much separate, disturbed and independent thinking and action and so little real coordination that despite regular conferences, meetings, speeches delivered and resolutions passed, we have not succeeded in evolving a method of really coordinated action either between the Centre and the provinces or between the different departments both at the Centre and in the province. And I think that is not a helpful way of doing things, at any time, and at a time of crisis like today, it is an eminently bad way and we shall have to find means of tackling our problems in this way...

As you perhaps know for a number of years I presided over the National Planning Committee.³ It is true that my career as Chairman of that Committee was interrupted several times when I was sent to prison. Nevertheless, that work, that activity of mine was certainly beneficial to me and I hope it would benefit the nation. Somehow or other, to my surprise and distress, it has remained suspended in the air and has not taken the shape as I have hoped. I find so much work done by our ministers and our officers in the provinces and elsewhere, and yet I have a feeling that it is all isolated and uncoordinated work, though sometimes it might overlap. Now, quite apart from considering the problem practically with such national thinking as I have acquired, I am led to think that this is not the way to understand or tackle a problem and one must think of it because each problem is intimately interrelated with some other problem.

Indeed if you follow this way of inter-relationship, you have to cross national boundaries and consider problems in international terms. However, leave that international aspect for the moment, we should at least consider the problems in national terms, not in the provincial, not in departmental, not in any kind of terms which are limited and occasionally overlapping. I think because of this lack of planned thinking, sometimes something is being required in one place, say one industry has not got it, therefore, that industry is not working adequately, while that very same thing is being wasted in another, but the two cannot be joined together because neither of them knows what the other wants. So it is this kind of thing that should be put an end to.

But then another question arises as to whom we talk to about planning or we talk to about any kind of activity? What exactly are we aiming at? It is not good enough to just talk vaguely about the progress and advancement of India and the

3. The National Planning Committee was appointed in 1938 by Subhas Chandra Bose, President of the Congress, with Nehru as Chairman and K.T. Shah as Secretary. The work of the committee was hampered when several Congressmen associated with the work were imprisoned between the years 1940-1945. The Committee, however, published a number of reports prepared by its various sub-committees.

Indian people. Not even good enough to talk about higher living standards. We, of course, want higher living standards. Of course, we want to abolish poverty and unemployment, but all this becomes rather pious talk which everybody can indulge in, without the effort to think where he is driving at. Therefore, if you are to work at all effectively, you must have a fairly defined clear picture in your mind as to where you are going to, as country and as a people. What kind of economic, social and industrial plans you are devising in your minds, so that everything may be directed to that end. If you think rather vaguely of bettering the condition of the Indian people or if something obviously is absolutely necessary, you can go on doing what you must do. You may go on producing engineers, and engineers are necessary for the new Roorkee University. Whatever the economic plan you may have, still you must train engineers for that economic plan, that is obvious. But still, unless you have a general direction, the type of picture you are aiming at, you cannot easily make part of that picture separately if you are aware, that is where our resources are limited, and not only ours but generally they are in many countries barring a very few fortunate ones.

You have to think very hard, in terms of priorities. What is to be done first and what is to be done second. The thing that is to be done second, may be an admirable thing, a necessary thing, you have got to do it. But still, it may be number two in the order of priorities, and if you do the number two thing, and not the number one thing, then the result is ultimately that the number two thing has also to be stopped because number one has not been done. So, it becomes an essential thing to have that picture and then to frame an order of priorities as to what you must do first of all, and having done that, the other things would be more easily done.

You know how Indian industry developed. It developed in spite of great obstruction and opposition from the then British Government fifty, sixty, seventy or even eighty years ago. It developed in jute and cotton, which are necessary things no doubt, but not the basic things, and even now, if you leave out one or two things, we depend almost entirely for every basic and important thing on other countries.

We talk loudly about the so-called industrialization. Industrialization means having those basic and key industries on which every other industry depends. It means if you go still further back to the development of scientific research and the application of science, it means the development of power. Without power you cannot achieve any real development. It means having certain basic things like the steel industry. If you define further it means finally the machine-making industry, as nothing else counts. If you have not developed the machine-making industry, you are thoroughly dependent on others. Now, here we have been talking about industrialization for the last sixty, seventy or eighty years and we can hardly make anything at all, not even small things like spare parts. We have to rush to America or England or Japan or some other country. It seems fantastic the way we have proceeded.

Those men who have money in this country are the ones whom people wrongly call industrialists. There are hardly any industrialists in this country. They don't

think in terms of industry or real industrial progress. They are interested certainly in helping India advance, in adding to the wealth of India by producing good sets. But they are also interested in getting profits, rather too soon. There is nothing to laugh about, that is natural. It is quite inevitable that at a certain stage of growth, they cannot put their money to get profits fifteen years later only. A well developed industry which has great resources can afford to put in money and wait for ten or fifteen years for a dividend.

But our outlook has not that considered element of planning and thinking of the basic things on which industry is to flourish, but rather of doing odd things, producing odd commodities, which the public may require. But that is not industrialization and that thinking means that you are completely dependent on the outside world. Now why has this happened?

Many of us do not know about obstructions and the difficulties of the economic situation that have been forced upon us, as well as a lack of vision and short-sightedness on our part. Today, we need not bother about the past. We have got to think about the future. If we think about the future, we must think in terms of laying the foundations of industrialization here, and not troubling ourselves too much by certain superstructures of it which we seek to build without laying those foundations. Now, as I said, maybe I exaggerate a little, because we do make some small machines. We do make something and, we will make the bigger machines. But, still, on the whole, we have not developed a machine-making industry in this country, which is so essential. There is a great deal of talk, of lack of dollars in great parts of the world and in India.⁴ Because much of the machinery comes from America and we have to pay in dollars. Well, that is difficult, owing to devaluation. Still, we think in terms of getting machinery from abroad and not making it ourselves. Well, obviously we had to get machinery from abroad to begin with. We cannot start from a scratch almost and start making machinery. But still it is worth remembering, what other countries have done in this connection, and I will give you two instances of an entirely different kind. Japan and Russia, they both had to get machinery from outside, but I am told that in Japan once they got a machine from outside they never get a similar one again. They make the second one like that themselves, or the third one as the case may be. Apart from the initial machine that they got, they made it a point to make the next one or the third one like that themselves. Now, we have never thought like that. We go on easily importing machines whether it is from a State or from a private capitalist. Now apart from our dependence in regard to the machines, it means a tremendous dependence in regard to spare parts. No machine can run unless we get the proper spare parts. Now it happens, again apart from that dependence, that our industries cannot function effectively and continuously because frequently there is some spare

4. In fact, India had to draw her full quota of \$100 million from the International Monetary Fund by March 1949 to meet its dollar shortage.

part or something that is not there, and then we wait for months and months and the functioning of that business slows down or stops, because the spare part has not come, or some part of the machine has not come. You see, it is impossible to go on in this way. It is better for us to stop all our superficial industry for a while and tighten our belts and concentrate on the fundamental machine-making industry, i.e. steel, which is absolutely essential for the progress. The rest will come rapidly enough, whatever you may make. Now, looking at this from another point of view the most important thing for us is to develop power. Industrial development depends upon power resources.

Now if you look at the map of India and look at that magnificent chain of mountains, Himalayas, stretching across from the North to the West and the North East. What I really doubt is if there is any equal area in the wide world, which has so much concentrated source of power, potential power. Probably it also has minerals, from which power can be tapped.

We have got big river valley schemes.⁵ Here in the exhibition you can see some of the charts showing these schemes. So these river valley schemes become very important, because they will produce the power, as well as water and canals and irrigation and more food, which are also highly important. But what is most important is that they will produce power and power is essential.

Again for those schemes, etc., we want machinery, big machinery and you have to pay heavily for it, and we have to go to America or some other country for it.⁶ Now we must go for we cannot help, because we do not make the machines, but the way we go on spending our time and energy on the secondary things in this country, and forget and do not concentrate on the primary things, amazes me. Possibly the only explanation is that while we think a lot about our respective departments or activities, we do not think constructively of the whole picture. So, we have to decide as exactly what we are aiming at? Once we see that, we have got some picture. No picture that you can make can be a complete picture, unchanging picture. Obviously not. Because conditions change and you have to continuously change your picture, adapt it to changing conditions, learning by experience. Nevertheless, all the time you have some kind of a picture in a frame before you, and you can judge of every activity that you undertake in reference to that picture and that frame. Is it helping it or is it just an independent activity, you can ask. Is it primary activity or priority number one or is it something else?

5. There were 135 river valley projects under execution. Of them eleven were multipurpose, sixty irrigation and sixty-four power projects. When completed they would cost the Government Rs. 5900 million.
6. India had secured from the World Bank a loan of \$ 34 millions for the purchase of U.S. and Canadian locomotives for her railways and another loan of \$ 10 millions to finance the purchase of heavy U.S. tractors needed for the reclamation of weed-infested lands. A third loan of \$ 25 million for financing hydro-electric schemes of the Damodar Valley project was expected to be finalised by the end of 1950.

That is a way of doing things. Just ordinarily doing a village here and a town there is not the modern method or an effective method of doing it. Unfortunately, most of us who are politicians have had no training of that type of thinking. We have a certain training in agitation. We have a certain type of organizational training. We have a training in understanding the mass mind to some extent, in influencing the mass mind, in doing an odd job here and an odd job there. But this type of constructive approach for any kind of industrialization or planned system, we do not have unless we think about it in those terms. Even our civil servants trained very well in their particular departments, normally find it difficult to think of half a dozen departments at the same time. They think of their own job and that is, of course, inevitable, because that is the way they have to work and they are likely to work. So, how are we to develop this unified way of thinking about the problems of India, about the growth of industry? I am not talking about the political problems, but the economic, social and industrial problems. First of all, we have to have a rough picture in our mind as to where we are going. We have to lay down the priorities and then let the other things develop. The other things will develop of their own accord or we can take them up if we like. I therefore beg of you to consider this. More especially, because whatever and whoever may plan this kind of thing, one needs every type of mind to plan it. Of course, experts are required to do it.

2. Cooperation, Not Isolation¹

...Now an Honourable Member just referred to the Hindu Code² that is before us.³ Nobody thinks of course of finally passing that Bill in this session: that is not intended. We have arrived at the stage in that Bill when it is a purely preliminary stage, although we have taken some years to reach it. Even this stage has been

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly, 28 November 1949. *Constituent Assembly (Legislative) Debates, (Official Report)*, Vol. VI, Part II, 1949. pp. 4-13. Extracts.
2. The Hindu Code Bill aimed at reforming the Hindu personal law relating to property, marriage, inheritance, divorce, guardianship and adoption.
3. The Hindu Code Bill had been sent to a Select Committee. The support that it had received from the public was now sought to be whittled down by a stubborn opposition and drastic changes made in vital features of the Bill.

considered for, I believe, five or six or seven days; this may be called the first stage of the second reading before we go on to the clause by clause consideration of the Bill. This House will remember certain marathon performances in the last session in regard to this Bill, which no doubt were permitted by the law. I would beg this House to consider that this does not add to the credit of this House, because we want...

Lakshmi Kanta Maitra took exception to this statement saying it was a reflection on the House.

The Honourable Member will permit me to continue. I will explain what I mean. What I mean is this that any important measure in this House should be fully considered; any measure which gives rise to difference of opinion, on which there is considerable strength of opinion, must be considered fully and full time should be given, but when a tactic is adopted which is not of consideration but of pure and absolute delay, that is improper.

Lakshmi Kanta Maitra protested against this observation.

The Honourable Member is needlessly objecting to what I say. I am laying down a principle and I would like him or any other Honourable Member to object to that principle; I am not referring to any particular thing, and I do say that if this principle is not followed, it does not lead to the credit of the House being enhanced.

H.V. Kamath requested the Speaker to regulate the proceedings of the House.

JN: This measure has been before this House in the present stage for some time; it has come up again. Now it is clear that there is a variety of opinion in regard to this measure, that there are, one may say, at least two sets of opinions, one strongly in favour of it and the other opposed to it or opposed to some parts of it rather. It is clear also that one must not deal with a measure of this kind either by trying to sweep away one opinion or the other in a hurry; we must give it the fullest consideration at the same time and further it is also clear that measures affecting large numbers of human beings, their social customs, etc. have to be given the fullest consideration. I would submit for the consideration of the House that our proceeding with this Hindu Code merely in a spirit of sheer opposition to each other, well naturally, may lead to certain ultimate results, certain decisions, but will not be very helpful either now or later—and I am speaking for the moment for myself and I think for the Government also it would be desirable for us, for the House, as soon as a detailed consideration comes or a little before it to approach this matter, that is for representatives of different viewpoints to approach this matter in a more constructive way to see how we can expedite the passage of this Bill with what might be considered a large measure of consent. It is very difficult to aim at universal consent to anything, but with as large a measure of consent as possible. So, if I may suggest to the House...

Lakshmi Kanta Maitra intervened to say that a constructive suggestion would be in respect of a destructive measure.

JN: The Honourable Member is one of those persons who hold apparently rather strong opinion on this subject. What is more, the Government is committed to this thing. It is going through with it. On behalf of the Government I offer a *via media*; I offer a mid-approach and if the House accepts it, we shall welcome it and if not we shall proceed with the Bill as it is. I am speaking of the viewpoint of the Government but we are anxious....

Lakshmi Kanta Maitra interrupted to ask whether Nehru wanted to force it as a social measure.

JN: If the Government puts forward a measure it is for the House to accept it or reject it. The Government cannot do it by force.

Lakshmi Kanta Maitra argued that that was what Nehru had said.

JN: I said that Government would proceed with that. It is for this House to accept a measure, but if a Government takes an important measure and the House rejects it, the House rejects that Government and the Government goes and another Government comes in its place. It should be clearly understood that this is one of the important measures to which the Government attaches importance and on which it will stand or fall and because I do not wish to put it in that extreme way. I suggested to the House that this might be taken in an accommodating way so that it might be passed by general consent. If Honourable Members do not like that course, then automatically the other course comes into operation. Now, so that, if I may suggest it, in the course of this session this first stage of the second reading might be considered, might be, I hope, passed and then before the next stage of detailed consideration comes formally or informally or in both ways the different viewpoints might be represented in a committee and we might see how this general consent can be arrived at in regard to this Bill, even though it might lead to certain alterations or variations in the present Bill.

The House knows that the greatest stress has been laid by us on the question of food, because we have thought that so long as we are dependent upon other countries for food our whole economic structure is weak. So we have decided to give this priority number one. I should like to say that on the whole satisfactory progress is reported on the food front. I say this because I have noticed in some newspapers references to the fear that things were not going well. Of course things are not going well everywhere. There have been natural disasters such as floods

and in some places cyclones as in Andhra,⁴ which have done a lot of damage not only to human beings but to food expectation from that area. Still, generally speaking, I would say and I do say it on the authority of the Commissioner for Food Production that we are making good progress and I have no doubt in my mind—let it be perfectly clear to the country that after 1951 no food will be imported. In fact, if I may state it, this period is likely to be shortened, even though it may cause inconvenience. If the necessities of the situation demanded that period will be shortened. Even now we are on the whole, lessening our import of food, specially rice. In fact, we are trying to put an end to the import of rice completely, gradually....

May I mention, there has been a lot of talk and sometimes enquiries as to whether there was some kind of a wheat deal when I was in the U.S.A.⁵ All this proceeds from a wrong impression as to what I was supposed to do. What we normally do in foreign countries is that our representatives, who are there, deal with the representatives of the other governments or the trade in other countries. They try to purchase cheaply, whether it is wheat or rice or other goods. That is going on. When I went there I spoke in general terms of our need for wheat and other things. That is all. I did not discuss in detail with anybody. Our representatives were there and are there to continue talks about any purchase, if it is on favourable terms. There is no question of a particular or special deal. One of our representatives who was there, Mr Deshmukh,⁶ will soon be here to report to us the result of his talks. We buy wheat or anything else in the best market on the most favourable terms. If we can get them, if I may say so, on very special terms elsewhere we shall accept them. It is entirely a business deal as to where we can get them most advantageously.

In connection with the economic question, I may point out that it raises so many issues and our Government and this House will have to consider them separately or perhaps together later. We have to consider how to coordinate our activities more and more and as a Government we are going to give a great deal of thought to this. Of course, one of the main problems we have to face is the extremely low productivity in India of various things and till we raise that, it will be difficult for us to have enough wealth to go round for productive purposes.

I should like to say a few words in regard to our relations with Pakistan and foreign affairs generally. I am sorry to say that these relations continue to be strained and with all the efforts that we have made to improve them we have not succeeded in doing so in any large measure. Recently of course since devaluation came and Pakistan followed a different policy other points of strain and conflict have

4. Vijayawada and Masulipatam were hit by a cyclone on the night of 27 October taking a heavy toll of life and causing damage to property worth crores of rupees.
5. There had been a two-fold increase in the supplies of U.S. wheat and wheat flour to India under the international wheat agreement. India received a \$ 190,000,000 loan in 1951 for the purchase of two million tons of wheat from the United States.
6. Chintaman Deshmukh.

arisen.⁷ They have arisen not because we chose to raise them but simply because of the facts of the situation. Pakistan has accused us of deliberately trying to bring pressure upon them, to affect their economy or force them to do this or that in regard to devaluation of their rupee. This charge has been made, more especially I believe in regard to the jute situation.⁸ As a matter of fact the facts are quite simple. The price of jute rose so much that those who are buying it in India could not afford to buy it. They simply could not afford it. It was not an economic price for them to buy. It was pointed out to the Pakistan Government, that we could not buy it at their rate and they have to make some other arrangements. The Pakistan Government apparently thinks that this is a deliberate move to coerce them in regard to their economic policy. We do not wish to coerce anybody nor do we wish to be coerced by anybody. They can go their own way but it is quite impossible for us to accept prices in regard to certain commodities if they are too high. This is the simple proposition. I believe my colleague the Finance Minister repeatedly approached Pakistan and suggested that the whole matter should be reviewed and talks should take place but thus far no conference has definitely been arranged.

There are other matters of importance, matters in regard to which there has been a continuing dispute with Pakistan. One very important matter is evacuee property.⁹ I need not say much about it except that as far as I can see the only right way to settle it, apart of course from coming to a settlement ourselves, if there is no settlement, there can be discussion and consideration by experts on both sides and further if there is no agreement there may be a reference, if you like, to some high judicial authority. The only other way seems to me to be to carry on this dispute shouting at each other without any settlement at all. Whether it is the question of evacuee property or the canal waters dispute the matter can be examined technically by experts on both sides and thus the area of dispute should be limited. Then that can be considered in a normal way.

Then, finally there is the question of Kashmir. The House knows that this matter is going to be considered by the Security Council in the course of the next few

7. Following the devaluation of sterling against U.S. dollar (4.03 to 2.80 to the dollar) in September 1949, India also had devalued the rupee (3.32 to 4.76 to the dollar). But Pakistan decided against devaluation of the Pakistan rupee. This decision had necessitated certain new measures in Indian fiscal policy such as imposition of export duties on some essential items like oilseeds, tobacco, and steel through an ordinance to check inflation in Indian markets.
8. Increase of export duties on hessian from Rs. 80 to Rs. 350 a ton was partly to check speculative rise in prices and mainly to put a ceiling on the price of manufactured articles. The mills might be compelled to desist from purchasing raw jute both in India and from Pakistan at unduly high prices. Pakistan was thus prevented from securing for its raw jute a rise in the Indian rupee to the full extent of devaluation.
9. India held from the beginning that the evacuees should be allowed to return and take possession of their properties. But the Pakistan Government suddenly promulgated an ordinance on 15 October 1949 on appropriation of evacuee property which led to migration of Hindus from Sind.

weeks. I do not know when it will be considered because the United Nations Commission has been writing its report in Geneva and they are supposed to go to Lake Success sometime in the second week of December. After that they will present their report. It may be considered soon after that, that is in the month of December. Or, if it is delayed, it may be considered early in January. Since the 1st of January last, ceasefire has subsisted in Kashmir. There have been a number of incidents, but generally speaking there has been no such resumption of operations. We hope, of course, there will be no such resumption. We have repeatedly made it quite clear that we want this problem of Kashmir, as all problems, settled by peaceful methods without recourse to warfare because we are convinced that warfare leads to disastrous consequences and should be avoided as far as possible. Nevertheless, it cannot be avoided if another party starts it, or if there is aggression, one has to meet that. That is why originally we had to go to Kashmir; that is why we have stayed on—that is, our armed forces have stayed on—and we have given assurances not only to the people of Kashmir but to our own people that we will not withdraw our forces from there till there is any danger left of aggression from outside. Now, that is the position in Kashmir. We propose to stay where we are and to protect Kashmir in accordance with our pledged word, to give every help to the people of Kashmir and at the same time to seek ways of solving this problem by peaceful methods. But, on the other side, in Pakistan, I regret to say, passions are continually aroused on religious grounds, there is a continual talk of *jehad*, etc., and it is even said by people—responsible leaders—that there is bound to be war and they will have war. Well, I suppose all this talk is perhaps partly due to a feeling of frustration on the other side. I am sorry for that. But so far as we are concerned as a government we do not propose to move this way or that way, either to be moved to anger by the hysteria on the one side or to be moved to any weakness by any threats on the other side. We shall proceed on our even course, always trying for a peaceful settlement of this, trying to help the United Nations which has been in charge of it to find a peaceful settlement and at the same time not surrendering to anything that we consider wrong. That is the position in Kashmir. We shall have to send a deputation, or delegation rather, to Lake Success when this matter is considered by the Security Council.

I should like to inform the House in regard to the question of Indians in South Africa. When I say 'Indians' I should like to make it clear that I am not referring to Indian nationals but Indians by descent who are really South African nationals. We have been for some time past in communication with the Government of South Africa about the holding of a conference to consider these questions.¹⁰

10. In implementing its policy of apartheid the Union Government of South Africa opened separate telephone booths, post offices, entrances to railway stations, aerodromes, etc., for European and non-Europeans. From 6 to 11 February 1950, talks were held by the representatives of India, Pakistan and South Africa in Cape Town to explore an acceptable basis of discussion at a Round Table Conference, in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

That was the recommendation of the United Nations to us and to all the parties concerned, and immediately after that we suggested the holding of this conference. But there has been great delay in this correspondence. Ultimately the South African Government suggested that before we held the conference itself there should be a preliminary conference to consider what the conference is about and how the conference should proceed. We agreed to that also. Again there has been delay, but now finally a date has been fixed, that is February 6th, when this preliminary conference can take place in Cape Town, and representatives will go to it from India—and Pakistan I presume—to consider these matters...

Now, may I say a few words in regard to my visit to America and Canada and the United Kingdom? I need not say very much because a great deal of publicity has been given to it in this country. But I would like to say this, that is, the objective which I had in going to America—both the United States and Canada—was achieved to my complete satisfaction. I did not go there for deals and bargains or for intrigues. I did go there to create a friendly impression, if I may say so, a friendly interest in our problems, and generally to create an atmosphere of goodwill between the two countries. I believe we succeeded in doing that, and I believe that the responsible people in the United States thoroughly appreciated, if I may say so, the frank way in which I explained our position in world affairs. They appreciated it. Some of them may have liked it to be somewhat different perhaps. But they appreciated in the end that that was the only right position that India could have and should have. That is a position in which India pursues her foreign policy without any commitments to other countries, without any binding ties, but in friendly cooperation with all the countries that cooperate with her. Indeed, it was largely in consonance, to give a historical parallel, with the policy which the great founder of their own nation had pursued in the early days of the American Republic. Reading history, past events may seem to us quite not so important as the events that surround us today—wars and revolutions—but what happened in the early days after the American Republic came to be founded was big enough in the context of that world, and soon after came the revolutionary wars in Europe and then the Napoleonic wars. Big revolutions and big changes were taking place all over the world. Washington and the other founders of the Republic definitely and deliberately tried to keep away from alignments in these struggles for world mastery as they were considered then. So, it is not difficult for an American bred up in that tradition to understand that this new Republic of India should not commit itself or align itself with any particular country or policy but should keep on friendly terms with all countries and decide each question on the merits as it arises. Naturally, we have our viewpoint, naturally apart from any particular viewpoint in regard to a particular question, we have a certain approach to questions. That approach is conditioned by the geographical fact of where we are, by our historical background, by the background of our struggle for freedom during the last thirty years or so—it is very much conditioned by that and by various other factors. For us and I think

personally for the world the most important thing today is not what is happening in Europe, important as it may be, but what is happening in Asia and various parts of Asia. I think it is undoubted that when history comes to be written about this period, these enormous changes that are taking place in Asia will probably be the most important part of that narrative.

So, our whole perspective necessarily is different from that of a person possibly in Europe or possibly in America. That does not mean that we see things differently or that we necessarily must differ, but that our approach is somewhat different, the emphasis that we lay might be different and possibly sometimes our judgment of situation would be different. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it is necessary for us to seek the largest measure of cooperation and not to live in isolation. When we say that we shall try to follow our own policy, it does not mean a policy of isolation, it does not mean, as I make it clear, just a barren neutrality or a passivity. We think in active terms of how we can help in such measure as we can in the maintenance of world peace. I am not conceited enough to imagine that we can control the fortunes of the world or prevent something happening that otherwise would happen. But there can be little doubt that we can occasionally at least make a difference. Well, I hope that this country will make that difference whenever it has the chance, and that difference will be in favour of peace.

So, this is the general line that I adopted in other countries in regard to our foreign policy, and I laid special stress, of course, on Asia as she is emerging after several hundred years of colonial domination because that is the most important problem of the age. There has been a great deal of talk about the possibility of war—world war I mean. So far as I can judge, such possibilities as there were have receded. I don't think there is any great chance of any war on a big scale, on a world scale in the near future. Certainly the position in Europe is much quieter from that point of view, although very serious problems remain. In Asia, in spite of the big changes that have taken place, I don't see any probability of military conflict, apart from the local conflicts that are going on, on a wide scale. Therefore, I think on the whole it may be said that in spite of the various crises and upheavals and difficulties, there is more chance of avoidance of any great world struggle than there was during the past year or two, and India and other countries if they try hard enough can perhaps help still further in avoiding war.

This House must have followed with interest and with a certain degree of satisfaction in the progress that was made in the settlement of the conflict in Indonesia.¹¹ It is a little difficult to say anything now finally as to what will emerge, but I think one may say with a certain measure of certainty that a very

11. On 14 December 1949, the provisional Constitution of the United States of Indonesia, grouping the islands of the East Indies except New Guinea, was signed at Batavia. The Netherlands handed over full sovereignty to Indonesia on 27 December 1949 ending the 340-year colonial rule.

big step forward has been taken in the way of that settlement and in Indonesia becoming a completely free country. I should like, on behalf of this House, to congratulate the great leaders, of the Indonesian Republic, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister¹² and others, on the part they have played which has been a part not only a remarkable courage but of remarkable wisdom and restraint. During these two or three years, Indonesia and India have come very close to each other. The public may know something of this by occasional messages, etc., but as a matter of fact the measure of mutual understanding and friendship that has arisen between us has been far greater than even perhaps this House realises. It has been a very great pleasure to me to deal on an official basis and sometimes even on a personal basis with these leaders of the Indonesian Republic, and may I say that some of those leaders, especially the President, know more about the culture and the history of India and even the recent history of our struggle for freedom than perhaps many of our politicians in India itself.

May I also refer to Africa, rather East Africa. Now, if Asia is dynamic today and turbulent and changing, there is little doubt that Africa also is on the eve of great changes. It is a matter of great distress that some parties in Africa should add to the racial problem there instead of trying to solve it, and to make it worse because nothing can be so bad and so dangerous in the future as a big eruption in Africa on the racial basis. So far as we are concerned, it has been our policy and it was the Congress policy long before we came into the Government, that Indians in Africa should develop close contacts and should try to serve the people of Africa and we had always made it clear that we want no privileges, no interests in Africa which come in the way of the indigenous inhabitants of Africa. At the present moment, apart from the South African problem which is a different one, we have to deal chiefly with the African races in East Africa where there are a considerable number of Indians in business or in some professions.¹³ I am happy to say that our relations there have progressively improved and our representative there has done extraordinarily good work in this behalf. One gesture of ours has been to give some scholarships to African students to come to India. It was greatly appreciated there and helped in bringing those Africans nearer to the Indians.

Questions are asked very often about the Foreign Service and about our Ambassadors abroad and criticisms are made. Those criticisms may be justified. Sometimes they are. We have to build up this Foreign Service from scratch. Foreign Services, more than any other Service, require a tradition and experience. You may send the best of your officers with experience of domestic service and he may

12. A. Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta.

13. There was race discrimination and inequality of opportunity in all walks of life in East Africa. The white settlers had since 1926 been agitating for Dominion status for East Africa, which would have meant the oppression of fifteen million Africans and one lakh Indians by eighty thousand Europeans.

not necessarily be good in a Foreign Service at all. In fact, there are very few countries who have a long experience and tradition in their foreign work behind them. It takes a long time to develop it. Normally speaking, a country like India, one which is newly free, might take a number of years to develop foreign contacts. We were not eager to develop them, I can assure this House. But circumstances were such that we had no choice. We cannot function as an independent country without having those contacts. Indians, fortunately, are spread out in all parts of the earth's surface. In some places, they are progressing and advancing. In some places, their presence has created problems with which we have to deal. We can either deal with them through some foreign agency or through our own representatives. If we deal with them through a foreign agency, then we are dependent on that foreign agency; we are not looked upon as an independent nation. So gradually we have been forced to develop these foreign contacts by virtue of the fact that we are independent and by virtue of our growing importance in international affairs. Other countries seek contacts with us; send representatives to us. We cannot deny them; we welcome them. Once they do that, it is very difficult for this to be a unilateral affair—they go on sending people here and we do not send our representatives to their country. So, our hands have been really forced by circumstances and by the fundamental fact that India is important in the world. We cannot get away from the fact that India is important and we cannot shirk. Once we become free, we simply step into a certain position of relative importance in the world.

All these foreign establishments have been expensive. I have no doubt that if we try hard enough we can save money. We are trying as hard as we can. No doubt, in our inexperience we have wasted money. But I should like to tell this House—and this is from personal experience, having gone abroad repeatedly during the past year and having met our representatives in Europe and America (and they came to see me even when I could not go to that particular capital)—that most of our people in Foreign Service abroad are living in exceedingly difficult conditions. It is not their fault or our fault. It may be the fault of this devaluation and exchange rates which are continually changing—we cannot keep pace with them. Apart from the top people who may be paid adequately, the other people find it very difficult to subsist. While to begin with there were many people who wanted to go abroad, now, those who have gone abroad, nearly all want to come back, because they say they cannot carry on there. Somebody pointed out that they could not buy a pair of shoes or boots and that he had not got them. So, we have to face this difficult problem.

We are reducing our staff in various offices for reasons of economy, but we cannot possibly allow our people to remain there in a shattered condition in which they cannot afford to live a normal decent life.

Another fact which I should like to bring to the notice of the House is this. It is our desire—and the House has repeatedly reminded us—to Indianize all our services abroad.

B. Das intervened to ask whether Nehru meant to Indianize their lives.

JN: Oh, I am sorry, I thought he was referring to their wives!

So, now we have tried to do this but we have had to face certain difficulties—the difficulties being, first of all, that this process means increasing the cost roughly by three times: certainly doubling the cost of the post and normally three times, taking everything into consideration, because the cost covers not only the question of salary, it means also the families etc., going and the cost of passage is heavy especially when large families have to go. Secondly, efficiency has suffered greatly—not because Indians are inefficient: not that—but efficiency in a foreign country has to be judged from other standards, including the standard of knowing the language of that country. A person may be thoroughly efficient in his job here, and when he is suddenly transported to a foreign country in some relatively minor, junior capacity as a clerk or something like that, he is helpless there. Instead of helping the office, he has to be looked after; his family has to be looked after, because they are complete strangers there; they do not know the language; they do not know the customs, with the result that it takes months and sometimes a year before he gets into it, and some other arrangements have to be made for the work to be done. These are the difficulties—heavier cost, lowering of efficiency and sometimes the work having to be done by somebody else all the same. It is an extraordinary situation and inevitably, the only thing we can do is to go slow. I am for the moment talking about the lower ranks, not about the top ranks. I am talking about clerks, superintendents and such like persons who are sent from here.

Mohanlal Gautam asked whether Nehru would include *chaprasis* and chauffeurs in that category.

JN: Yes, as a matter of fact, we have sent *chaprasis* and chauffeurs who get on better than clerks and others. I should therefore like this House to remember in regard to this question of Indianization the consequences which too rapid Indianization brings in its train.

Then, a question was put about the house that we have purchased in London for our embassy there. To be quite frank with this House, there was no immediate urgency for us to purchase this house in London. We need not have purchased it for a year or two, but we purchased it because it was a tremendous bargain and because it was quite essential, if not now, a year later or two years later to have a house in London for our embassy for the various functions in regard to an embassy. We want a house like that in Washington and in one or two other places, because otherwise it is an exceedingly costly business. We have found that the annual expenditure in rent is so great that it is far cheaper to buy a house and reduce our monthly and annual expenditure, apart from the fact that an Embassy usually possesses its own house and does not remain in rented houses on the sweet will

and pleasure of the owner of that building. We calculated that in New York we were spending a vast sum of money over numerous offices spread out all over the place. We have bought a building there or taken it on lease—I forget—where all our offices will be located. If you see that big sum which we have paid for that place, it is a very big sum. If you compare the amount that we have spent over the purchase of the house, with the sums that we have paid annually by way of rent for a number of years, you will find that we would be saving money by this transaction. We have followed this practice of buying property, if we could get it cheap, at the principal centres. London was obviously one of the places; Paris was another; New York was a third one where this could be done. Today of course we would not have thought of spending any money. It was done last year and it is there.

I was talking about the Foreign Service. May I remind the House of the death of two of our Ambassadors on service abroad? One was our Ambassador in Cairo, Dr Syud Hussain, who died many months ago.¹⁴ Another recent death was that of Diwan Ram Lal in Rome where he went recently.¹⁵ Of course, the cause of their death was not necessarily connected with their work. But the fact is that in many cases the work of our embassies has been fairly heavy and the conditions of living have been not so good in some places. In some places they are of course good, but that is not so in the case of some others and that has affected the health of many members of our staff.

May I also mention a very sad case that occurred yesterday—the death of a very gallant and brave soldier Brigadier Kanhaiyalal Atal, who died suddenly yesterday.¹⁶ Perhaps one of the most spectacular actions of our campaign in Kashmir was the action just about a year ago when our forces won the Zojila, a pass at eleven thousand feet. It was an extraordinary feat which may go down in military manuals. Brigadier Atal was in command of our forces and his name will always be remembered in that connection. It was a great sorrow to me and I am sure the House will agree with me that the death of this very gallant and young soldier with so much promise just when he was on leave for a day or two was a very sad event.

14. 25 February 1949.

15. On 20 November 1950, he died of a heart attack.

16. Kanhaiyalal Atal died of heart failure while on leave in Delhi.

3. Food Production on a War Footing¹

I desire to make it perfectly clear that, whatever happens, whether there is a cyclone or an earthquake, we are determined to stick to the target date of 1951 after which we shall not import foodgrains for our consumption.² This decision has been forced on the country by the pressure of events, for no country can continue to live beyond its means, that is, its production in its fields or its factories. This, unfortunately, has been the position in India, and too long have they ignored the serious implications of such a policy. There is no doubt that if the country failed to achieve self-sufficiency in food by December 1951, it would have to go short, but there would be no imports. There should be a progressive reduction in imports ending with a complete stoppage after 1951.³

The fight on the food front should be on a war basis which implies an elimination of all delays and reaching the given objective in time, but with none of the wastages that war implied. We have to create a proper psychological atmosphere for stepping up food production, an atmosphere in which the kisan, the zamindar, and the city-dweller alike will appreciate the urgency of the problem. A coordinated planning for agricultural production is needed for this. Thus, there will be no conflict between increasing food crops and commercial crops. Cooperative farming is always preferable in the interest of higher production. Small agricultural holdings hamper production and that consolidation of holdings on lands already cultivated is a long-range problem. The provinces should consider at least the introduction of co-operative farming in reclaimed lands. Care should be taken to see that small uneconomic holdings are not encouraged in reclaimed lands.

It is necessary now to take a proper statistical assessment of the progress of the 'Grow-More-Food' schemes launched by the provinces. During the last two

1. Address to provincial officials dealing with agriculture, New Delhi, 28 November 1949. Based on reports published in *Hindusthan Standard* and *The Hindustan Times*, 29 November 1949.
2. Early in 1949, the Government launched a campaign for self-sufficiency in food to produce an additional 4.8 million tons of food crops during 1950-51 and stop all imports of foodgrains by December 1951. The plan aimed at concentrating on selective schemes which would yield results in short period. The reclamation of cultivable waste in Rajasthan and the provinces of East Punjab, the U.P. and the C.P., tubewell construction in East Punjab, the U.P., Bihar and Bombay and Madras were the projects envisaged in the plan. The distribution of subsidized manure and improved seeds in areas with assured irrigation facilities was also to be done. A Commissioner for Food Production was appointed at the Centre to coordinate all the plans.
3. Drought in Madras, floods in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and earthquakes in Assam destroyed nearly 5.5 million tons of foodgrains. This not only neutralized the effects of the self-sufficiency drive but created a fresh deficit necessitating heavy imports in 1951.

or three years considerable work, no doubt, has been done but in the absence of reliable data the results cannot be ascertained correctly. In this connection, the provinces can adopt the "random sampling" method of assessing food crops. This will also help in fixing responsibility for extension of the schemes on individuals entrusted with the task.

No country can afford to spend more than what it produces and upset the balance of imports and exports. Imports cannot for long exceed exports, and exports ultimately depend on internal production. The problem of over-population⁴ in India is true only in the sense that our per capita production is low. There is much waste of manpower as the yield per acre is lower than in other countries.⁵

If the necessary psychological atmosphere is created for food sufficiency not only among the farmers, but among all classes of people, they can achieve their goal even in 1950. But they have to generate the necessary enthusiasm and concentration.

4. The population of India which grew at a rate much less than one per cent before 1941, rose at a rate of 1.25 per cent during the decade 1941-1951 and was 36.1 crores in 1951.
5. In 1947, India had only 198 million acres of land under cultivation for a population of more than 320 million—at least 20 per cent less than what should have been the norm. Even this land could not produce as much as it should have done. In India, the yield of wheat was 660 lbs. per acre while in a country like Egypt it was as high as 1,918 lbs.

4. The Future of the Economy¹

Jawaharlal Nehru: Well, now that we have fixed up some kind of a monthly meeting like this, it means that you must give me the lead. Unless there is anything special that I can tell you, the idea is that you should put questions to me so that I can deal with them.

Question: Could you give us an assessment of the economic situation in India?

JN: That is a very big question. I personally should say that it is improving somewhat. But this slight improvement or slight deterioration apart—I think it is improving and it will go on improving—what I am chiefly concerned with is that whatever policy we might adopt, it is quite essential to have accurate data.

1. Interview to the press, New Delhi, 5 December 1949. P.I.B.

Let us take food. We are laying great stress on food. But till now we did not get any clear data about production, because we have to rely ultimately on—say, the *patwari*—the local village official—who knows the conditions about his village. Now, he is not a very good reporter. No doubt, we get reports from the provincial Governments, etc. But once you examine them, these reports are from petty village officials and the result is that we do not clearly know what the actual position is. So it becomes important to set up some machinery to check up the actual figures and from time to time to find out whether there is progress or not. That is one of the important things that we shall have to do. In fact, any kind of planning depends on statistics—accurate statistics, and once one knows what the position is one can deal with it more satisfactorily.

Q: Are any changes envisaged in village administration particularly at the *patwari* level.

JN: I was asked about this *patwari*—the petty village official and what we were going to do to improve the system. Now, that is a rather difficult matter and the provincial Governments have to deal with it. What we can do—and that is a fairly good method—is to have sample surveys and checks. I am not thinking of a complicated system all over the villages, that is a difficult matter. But one can, by means of sample surveys, check the situation and find out more accurately what it is.

Q: You are quoted to have told a Kerala delegation² that the Government was in difficulties. Will you tell us what these difficulties are?

JN: I said this: India has to face very difficult problems and in that context all those problems—questions of linguistic distribution etc.,—are of secondary importance, however desirable they might be. Therefore we must deal with the other problems first and then linguistic problems. Because any division of provinces or redistribution of boundaries involves all kinds of complicated calculations and difficulties, and new problems are created, I suggested that this was not the time to do it.

Q: Could you tell us something about what Government has done about the black money?

JN: I am sorry, I cannot give you any accurate answer, except that quite recently when I came back I found this matter was still under consideration, that is to say,

2. The Kerala delegation suggested a scheme to bring together the Malayalam-speaking people, who had been divided in the past and were living in different administrative units in Tamil and Kannada areas and in the States of Travancore and Cochin.

certain aspects of it had to be enquired into before any step was taken and I suppose before long that step will be taken.

Q: Have you anything further to report about the activities of the various committees that were being set up to achieve certain production targets?

JN: I cannot give you anything further. One thing, however, I should like to say is that in regard to food production, my information is that the situation is definitely good. Certain reports in the newspapers which seem to imply that we are not doing well and that we may have to extend the date for self-sufficiency are not, I think, justified. We have had some local disasters like the Andhra cyclone which has destroyed a good part of the harvest, but two things are noticeable. One is that there is far greater awareness all over of this food situation and of the necessity firstly for avoiding waste and secondly for producing more food. Secondly, our schemes for food production are promising to yield results in spite of various difficulties. For instance we want a lot of tractors but they have not come yet. In spite of that we are making good progress. But the really important thing is—and I attach much importance to it—the awareness among all—provincial Governments, officials and the public to deal with this matter effectively.

Q: You have seen the press statement of the Burmese Minister about the prospective conference on South East Asian defence.³ Is India going to lead it?

JN: Well, as a matter of fact, I wanted to tell you something about this myself and I have got here a cutting on this. I was also surprised when I saw it in the papers. I do not know anything about it—or rather I know very little about it. I know nothing about the conference to be held in February. There have been vague talks about some kind of a conference but that was connected—really a continuation of our conference held in January here in regard to Indonesia.⁴ At that time it was suggested that South East Asian countries might meet together to consider their own problems. That was in last January, and I think the Philippines proposed that the conference be held there. And there the matter ended. Again, some of these talks were revived, I think, in New York among the delegations, but I know nothing about it.

Q: Has the Government tried to find out what the industrialists want and what will satisfy them?

JN: That starts with the assumption that they are not cooperating and that they want something before they will cooperate. I don't think those assumptions are

3. U E. Maung revealed in London on 2 December 1949 that a conference of South East Asian countries concerned with the defence of their democratic integrity and sovereignty was likely to be held in coming February in the Philippines.

4. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 9, pp. 165-174.

completely justified, though I think there has been some justification for it in the past. I can't tell you what any individual group of industrialists wants, but surely our Industry and Supply Minister and others are in fairly constant touch with them and they discuss matters with them. Anyhow, I believe that any particular non-cooperating spirit is not present now.

Q: Has the Government's attention been drawn to the fact that during recent months the number of lockouts has increased?⁵

JN: I believe you are referring to the mills being closed. Our attention has been very much drawn to that.

Q: In the *Newsweek* of October 17, Mr Ernest K. Lindley⁶ has written: "When interviewed Nehru in New Delhi a year ago,⁷ he left no doubt that in the event of an armed conflict between the Soviet Union and the West, India would stand with the West, although he emphasised that India could not afford a war and would remain a non-belligerent as long as possible." May we know whether this is simply inspired propaganda or is based on fact?

JN: Obviously, I can't remember even having given an interview, much less what I said. Our policy in this matter has been repeatedly made very clear. He might have got a wrong impression. Nobody can say of any future contingency, but our whole policy is to avoid, first of all, that contingency insofar as we can, and that is a help in avoiding a war coming. And, secondly, if a war comes, to follow a policy which will put an end to the war as soon as possible. But, of course, we can't say what will happen.

Q: Shall we take it as lies?

JN: There are certain impressions that he gathered, wrongly may be. As it is stated, it is a wrong impression.

Q: Do you intend inviting Mr Ernest Bevin to the celebrations connected with the inauguration of the Republic in January?

5. At the meeting of the Central Advisory Council of Industries in November 1949, it was revealed that more than 215 industrial undertakings had shut down, throwing about 80,000 workers out of jobs. The reasons advanced for the closures were: old and worn-out machinery, scarcity of raw materials, lack of capital and labour troubles.
6. (1899-1979); reporter, *New York World*, 1924-31; political writer, *New York Herald Tribune* 1931-37; chief of Washington bureau, *Newsweek*, 1937-61; political commentator, *Washington Post*, 1938-43; member, Policy Planning Council, State Department, 1961-69.
7. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 7, pp. 615-617. In fact, Nehru did not say anything that would suggest supporting the West in case of war.

JN: We shall be very happy if Mr Bevin can come here. We have not thus far issued any invitations for the ceremonies, chiefly because we did not want to have any great pomp and show in regard to those ceremonies. Mr Bevin would probably be coming to Colombo and he will be very welcome here in Delhi.

Q: How do you view the developments in Asia in the face of communism?

JN: That is rather a limited question. Asia is passing through a very severe phase of transition from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy. Asia's growth, having been arrested for a long time past, suddenly finds itself free in a large measure to go ahead, that is, we find it is the extension of the industrial revolution, which began 150 years ago, to Asia at a peculiar moment of world crisis. What the results of that will be, it is exceedingly difficult to envisage, and one of the phases of this very important phase is the communist phase in China.

Q: Can we hope to get some specific news about the recognition of China? If so, when?

JN: Of course, I cannot fix a date for these things. When a date is fixed, we have to take action. There is no question of fixing a date.

Q: Would you expect this communist phase in the developments in Asia to predominate in the long run?

JN: I should imagine that first of all, industrialisation will take place. Secondly, apart from communism, it is a mixed phase of democracy coming up. Democracy functions on various planes, the mass plane, including, especially in China, on the communist plane. Even in China, you will notice, apart from what is said, what is done there, and the economy that is set up there is far from communist. Undoubtedly, the leaders are 100 per cent communists; but the actual economy, at the present moment, is a mixed economy under communist control. It depends on the actual situation and the reactions of the Chinese people as to what shape it may take later.

Q: Will you define 'mixed economy'?⁸

JN: Well, if a thing is a mixture, it may be a mixture in any proportion. Mixed economy we are undoubtedly in. Basically we may be continuing the old economy

8. The basic document of the Government's industrial policy was the statement of 8 April 1948 which contemplated a mixed economy. While private enterprise was allowed, the Government undertook responsibility for the development of those industries which were too important to be left in private hands.

here. But, there are inroads in it, inroads in the name of State control gradually increasing. The measure of increase will vary with different countries and different circumstances. Even before the British left here, our economy was certainly a capitalist economy; but there was a great deal of State control which in some capitalist countries does not exist: for instance, railways became State-controlled, the transport system, telegraphs, telephones, etc. In some countries, they are privately owned still. Where the private capital formation is not sufficient, the State has to intervene. Quite apart from policy, it has to intervene if it wants to do anything. That happens automatically. The State may deliberately try to encourage that or allow it to come automatically or through the pressure of events. When I talk about the Chinese mixed economy, that is a completely different thing. It means, in terms of communism, it is not communism or even full-fledged socialism, but something much less although they may in their minds aim at something more.

Q: May I know in what new fields the State has made what you call inroads in India after the British left?

JN: There are no big fields. If you look at the various industrial concerns that have been started or may be started, take for instance some big concerns in which the State has gone for a 50 : 50 share with private capital, normally a capitalist economy would not do that. Our proposals to have a steel plant, to have a machine tool industry, these are basic things. After all, we have talked a great deal about industrial development. There can be no industrial development till a machine-making industry is developed here. It is a very essential thing. Take all these river valley schemes which are multi-purpose schemes. They are completely State-owned and State-run.

Q: That is a compromise as you are inviting capitalists to invest in a machine factory or a steel plant.

JN: I do not know what you mean by compromise. The whole system is a compromise. It is a compromise which depends upon what the available resources in a particular industry are.

Q: Does that mean that the industrial policy stands changed?

JN: Which industrial policy?

Q: Which you made in April last.

JN: I do not know what you are referring to. We want to go ahead as fast as possible. We laid down certain criteria about certain basic industries which we would like to be State-owned, other industries which may be partly State-owned and partly

private-owned, and others which should be entirely private-owned, a large field. It is a rough list.⁹ The first list was one which we should like to be State-owned, basic industries, for instance, defence industries, and other basic industries like the steel plant. There are at present private steel plants; they are big ones; we do not want to touch any of them. The idea is that fresh ones should be started by the State. It is conceivable that in regard to some of them, we may invite the association of private capital, because it is more convenient and thereby we can add to our present resources.

Q: In view of the inauguration of the new Constitution and the Republic is there going to be any change in the constitution of the Cabinet itself?

JN: You do not expect me to answer that question as to what the constitution of the Cabinet is going to be at a particular moment.

Q: It is reported that a reorganisation of Government machinery is being contemplated?

JN: That is a completely different thing. Most of these items of news that appear have little basis in fact. But, possibly, people have been writing or thinking or hearing about it because of an entirely different approach to what we were considering some months ago about the reorganisation of the governmental machinery. That has nothing to do with the Republic or anything. To make the governmental machinery more efficient, we have been considering it and Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar was asked by the Cabinet to prepare a report.¹⁰ We are going to consider that some time or other, the whole object being to make the governmental machinery at the top more efficient.

9. In accordance with this policy the manufacture of arms and ammunition, production and control of atomic energy, and the ownership and management of railway transport were the exclusive monopoly of the Central Government. Also, new enterprises in industries like coal, iron and steel, ship-building, telephone, and wireless apparatus (excluding radios) and mineral oils could be undertaken by the State alone. The existing units would remain with their owners for ten years at the end of which the industrial policy would be reviewed. The rest of the industrial field would be occupied by private enterprise, but the State would progressively participate in it.
10. In 1949, Gopalaswami Ayyangar was asked to serve as a one-man Commission to report on the organisation of the Central Government. His report contained a "basic plan" of reorganisation in which a hierarchy of four ranks with certain principles in the allocation of portfolios emerged: Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State who had independent lesser portfolios or were in charge of a department within a ministry under a Cabinet Minister, Deputy Ministers and parliamentary secretaries.

Q: Will the present Government continue exactly in the form in which it is continuing?

JN: Obviously, a formal reconstitution would be necessary whether it is just before or after, because a new Assembly comes in. The least that has to be done is for the old Government, if it is not changed, to take a new shape. This swearing-in and this and that, all that has to take place.

Q: Will some representative of the States be taken in the new Cabinet?

JN: People are not taken into the Cabinet to represent provinces or States.

Q: They represent one-third of the whole area of the country.

JN: The one-third has become one complete whole; there is no third left.

Q: Shrimati Vijayalakshmi is reported to have made a statement in America that there will not be any nationalization for 15 years. We were under the impression that nationalization will take place in 10 years?

JN: You will remember that what was said was this that when we made those lists regarding certain private industries which came in the first list i.e., the list of basic industries which should be nationalized, we said that we don't intend, in any event to touch them for 10 years. Because just to remove any uncertainty that something may happen in two years. When it will be done and how it is to be done was not laid down at all. It was said in a kind of negative way. People talk a good deal about nationalization. I have previously tried to explain our position. We have certain limited resources. Now are we to use those resources in acquiring existing industries or are we to use them to add to those industries? Obviously we want greater production and we want more industries, etc. So unless a particular industry comes in the way of our planning or is not functioning properly—I am talking about private industries—we don't propose to touch it because we want to throw our resources to additional production.

Q: Have you come across certain views expressed by capitalist papers that they would like Government capital or subsidy to such establishment industries as textiles?

JN: I have not exactly come across but I have no doubt they would like it.

Q: Has your Government taken any official cognizance of the emergence of organized opposition in the form of kisan marches?



ADDRESSING THE CONVOCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ROORKEE,
25 NOVEMBER 1949





LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE NATIONAL SPORTS STADIUM,
NEW DELHI, 19 JANUARY 1950



AT THE BOARD OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, NEW DELHI, 20 MARCH 1950

JN: I presume you are referring to certain kisan marches in U.P. and Bihar.¹¹ First of all this is entirely a provincial matter and each province is dealing with this matter of zamindari legislation—naturally with our approval and consent. However, we don't come in the picture unless there is something happening against the Constitution. The U.P. Government is, if I may say so, very competent to deal with this or any other situation and no doubt they are dealing with it. The kisan march took place in connection with certain zamindari bill there and one of the provisions in the bill is that the kisan can acquire *bhoomidari* rights in the land after paying a certain sum—ownership rights—That is a permissive thing. Nobody is forced to pay. If he wants to acquire he can pay otherwise he can acquire in other ways. I don't see why there should be any excitement. The sooner these agrarian problems are settled the better.

Q: Don't you think that prohibition will affect our forthcoming budget?

JN: It will affect the provincial budgets surely. As a matter of fact I think such remarks as I made had some influence and have borne some results—not perhaps enough—but certainly they have not been completely ignored and no doubt the provincial budgets will be affected.

Q: Will not those having *bhoomidari* rights also like to sell that and divide them among their kisans?

JN: Yes, that is a very important factor to be considered. The difficulty is that one can't have large-scale or cooperative farms easily all over the place by compulsion and one thing we have been stressing is that all the new land acquired by Government under these new schemes should be kept as big units and made into a sort of cooperative farms. Regarding others it is difficult to start that. It must be kept in view that these small holdings are not going to add to the production in the future.

There is that tendency but then should you not try to prevent that happening as far as possible by other means?

Q: Could you let us have an idea of the subjects that will come up before the Commonwealth Conference at Colombo—broadly speaking what are the issues that will come up?

11. The kisan marches were organized by the Socialists on 25 November 1949 to press for the abolition of the zamindari system and the adoption of socialistic economic patterns.

JN: These conferences have seldom any precise agenda. One discusses various matters. Naturally since we are meeting there in Colombo at a particular time, the problems of Asia will no doubt be discussed, but, so far as I know, no agenda has been received. We will discuss the existing situation etc.

Q: Twelve M.L.A.s have resigned from their respective legislatures as a protest against the delaying tactics—in the formation of Karnataka province.¹² Is the Government going to yield to such pressure, or dilute the V.J.P. report on this subject?

JN: The Government has accepted that report and in accordance with that certain steps were taken regarding Andhra after Andhras fulfil certain conditions. The Andhras and Tamils are now considering how to effect it. One of the main considerations is where there is agreement we go ahead. Now the moment any two signify their agreement about details we go ahead. Otherwise we are not going to coerce anybody because of pressure from the one side as it does not help in solving the problem at all.¹³

Q: When is the Andhra Province going to be created?

JN: As soon as the Andhras and the Tamils have come to a complete agreement about details involved.

Q: This reply is like what the Britishers used to say, that as soon as Hindus and Muslims agree we will give you power.

JN: I don't think it is, though it may bear some analogy. This is a question of boundaries, etc. If you do that suddenly without careful thought, however peacefully you might do it, it brings all kinds of problems and friction in its train. Therefore, the best way is to come to an agreement. That was the reason why we did not wish any provincial redistribution question to be taken up. We took this question on the express understanding that they would produce general agreement. They have largely agreed and might be able to agree about details very soon.

Q: Will it be better to consider the whole problem from an all-India aspect so that each territorial provincial unit might become also economic unit?

12. On 4 December 1949, twelve M.L.As led by S. Nijalingappa tendered their resignation on the issue of unification. The Congress Working Committee refused permission. Mysore was not enthusiastic about joining Karnataka.

13. The Congress Working Committee on 21 December 1949 disapproved the agitation for a separate Karnataka province.

JN: That is a terrific problem—changing the whole map of India from the economic point of view as well as from other points of view. One cannot ignore all kinds of political, historic, cultural and other ties that have grown up in the past, and I just do not see how we can possibly do it at any time in a comprehensive way and much less at the present time when we have major economic and other problems before us.

Q: Is there any new development on the Indo-Pakistan front regarding economic deadlock, evacuee property and their refusal to take the Muslims from the refugee camps.

JN: I do not think I can tell you anything more than what has already appeared in the papers. Our general attitude, as I have repeatedly stated, is that we have to deal not only with specific problems, specific conflicts but with a certain background of suspicion and conflict which prevents it and comes in the way of solution of those problems. Now, we suggested that it would be helpful if India and Pakistan came to the conclusion and declared that whatever problems arose, whatever problems exist, they should be solved and resolved by peaceful methods and without resort to war. Now, that seems to be a simple declaration and though it does not solve any problem by itself, yet it does produce conditions for their solution because once you put out honestly and sincerely your intention not to resort to war, then you are compelled to think in other terms. That is a matter which we have put forward on several occasions and there it is. Of course, other problems are taken up separately; I do not mean to say that those problems should be delayed. I am quite sure that the tension in the countries and the suspicion and ill will would be considerably reduced if this factor is removed. Now take the two major problems—the problems of evacuee property and the canal waters. Both are immediate problems. Obviously they are problems which should be settled on a peaceful and on a technical level. We have suggested that this should be considered on a technical level between the two Governments. And suppose there is no complete agreement, we are perfectly prepared for that part which is not agreed to be referred to any impartial authority, whether it is judicial or any other body—so that the problem can be settled.

Q: Was that declaration which you have made repeatedly about India not wanting to settle any problem by war, communicated to Pakistan through formal diplomatic channels, and, if so, has any reply been received to it?

JN: Well, yes. It has been communicated and some kind of correspondence is continuing about it.

Q: What about the financial crisis resulting from devaluation between India and Pakistan? Do you think the deadlock will continue for long?

JN: Not even the worst deadlock continues for ever. In regard to this matter our position is that we are prepared to have talks with them. I have no special information to give you except what has appeared in the press. The Finance Minister also has recently explained the position.

Q: What do you say about the prospects of a peace conference in Japan to allay the cold war?

JN: If you mean the peace treaty conference, I should imagine the prospects are growing. So long as it does not warm up...¹⁴

I take it that it is the aim of every State to have what might be called in broad terms a welfare State. No Government in the world is going to say that we do not want a welfare State. They may differ in their opinion on how to reach the welfare State. But that is a different matter. Obviously when we talk of welfare State it means the abolition of poverty and grant of equal opportunities and amenities to the masses. We then come back to the question—how to do it. What method you would adopt for the purpose would depend from any point of view on the peculiar circumstances, resources and the capacity of the State or the group concerned. You may lay down a theory but in the application of that theory you have to see whether the State is also fit for it. Now, for instance, suppose you say we want to establish communism in Central Africa. Communism is a growth of extreme industrialism. You just cannot have it in North Africa. You may perhaps have some primitive form of communism because Central Africa has not the wherewithal to have it.

Q: But can we have it in India?

JN: In India the position is we suffer from under-production and lack of wealth formation. How can we increase the process of wealth formation as well as the process of proper wealth distribution?

You may come to a conclusion that a certain structure of society will yield good results, but then you have to take into consideration not only the productive apparatus of the country, the capacity of the country, that is, the technical capacity, but also in trying to introduce that society you cannot follow the policy to put an end to all production, that is, due to conflict, due to other reasons. So that while your ideal may be an extraordinarily good one, but in reaching that—if you reach it at all—you spend quite a generation or two in extreme distress, lack of production and poverty, you have to choose whether you are prepared to pay the price of

14. The formulation of a peace treaty with Japan had been delayed because of conflict of interests between Australia and New Zealand on the one hand and India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka on the other, and between Britain and the United States.

extreme distress for a vast number of people in the name of doing good to those people. So that there are many factors involved which you have to consider before you can apply a particular theory to any country. There are human factors involved; there are other factors also involved.

5. A Planned Approach to National Problems¹

Dr Gyan Chand was asked to carry out a survey of the development programmes of the various provinces on behalf of the Economic and Statistical Coordination Section of the Cabinet Secretariat. This book is the result of that survey.

During the past twelve years or more there has been in India a great deal of talk about planning. Just before the last World War began, the National Planning Committee undertook this vast task of planning in India. Its work was interrupted by the War and certain consequences flowed from it. It was never completed, as it was meant to be. Nevertheless, a great deal of good work was done. Official and non-official agencies became interested in planning for the great future that was ahead. During the later stages of the War the Bombay Plan² came out and the Government of India appointed all manner of panels and committees. Development Boards³ came into existence and everyone talked of planning and rapid industrial growth.

All this was hardly planning in the real sense of the word, as the projects and schemes that were produced dealt with particular sectors of industry or other subjects. The attempt to form an all-India picture was seldom made. Partly this was inevitable in the separate functioning of provinces.

1. Foreword to the book, *Provincial Development Programme*, published by the Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India. 26 December 1949. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Published in 1944, the Bombay Plan was signed by J.R.D. Tata, G.D. Birla, Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Ardeshir Dalal, Shri Ram, A.D. Shroff, Kasturbhai Lalbhai and John Matthai. The plan proposed a total investment of Rs.10,000 crores over a period of fifteen years distributed under the heads of industry, agriculture, communications, education, health, housing and miscellaneous.
3. The Advisory Planning Board, formed in October 1946, suggested the appointment of a Planning Commission of three to five members, a consultative body of 25 to 30 members, establishment of a Central Statistical Office and the placing of the Tariff Board on a permanent basis and with wider functions.

Expectations ran high and enthusiasm outran discretion and rather ignored the facts of the situation. Gradually the effects of war-time economy began to be felt. Food deficits led to a great drain on our resources and income. Then came the partition with all its terrible consequences and burdens. Wrapped up by these new problems, we paid little attention to the larger picture, till circumstances compelled us to cry halt. We had lived extravagantly and beyond our means. Whether this extravagance had produced any marked results in the way of development was not clear, because we lacked adequate statistics or other data which would give us some such indication.

Certain facts stand out. Before we can decide anything, we must know exactly where we are. We must have full information of what has been done by the Centre or the provinces, what results achieved, what waste of effort incurred. We must know what our capacity and resources are and function within them. We must have some picture of the future we are aiming at and plan so as to realise that objective as rapidly as possible. Intelligent planning is necessary for any ordered growth. It becomes doubly necessary when resources are limited and priorities have to be thought of, so that first things may come first. Planning is also necessary for a proper coordination of our varied activities. Or else there are bottlenecks, delays, and waste.

This report of Dr Gyan Chand gives us a bird's eye-view of the various development schemes in our provinces. As such it is an exceedingly useful book and should help us in forming some idea of what has been aimed at, what is done, and what is not done. Much more data will probably be required, before we can form a really correct picture. That data will not merely consist of economic facts and figures, but should include a social analysis of the situation and of the impact of our work on the masses of this country.

No major effort at development can succeed merely by governmental activity, however well-intentioned that might be. It has to bring in the people, make them understand the significance of it, enthuse them somewhat, and make them partners in the carrying out of the work. It is not enough to work for the people, it is necessary to work with them, and to make them realise that it is their work.

Unfortunately this sense of cooperative effort is largely absent in the country today and people are inert and passive and look up to Government to do everything for them. This prevailing psychology of the masses has to be changed. That is no easy task, but nonetheless it is an essential one, if substantial progress is to be made.

Dr Gyan Chand's main theme is of lack of coordination and perspective. That means lack of a planned approach to our problems. That lack is evident not only in the relations of the Centre with the provinces but also as between various departments of the Government.

In planning we must pay heed to the basic facts of the situation, economic and financial. But another fact, which is basic, is the social approach to the problem.

The world has developed some kind of a social conscience, and much, that might have been endured in the past, is no longer tolerated.

Dr Gyan Chand's report, I am sure, will help us in understanding the problem and in thinking a little more concisely about the future steps to be taken.

6. A Year of Hard Work and Hard Labour¹

I can hardly wish you a happy New Year. But I can wish you a year full of hard work and hard labour, not empty words and empty labour. Work is something that fills you with satisfaction, that enables you to realise that you are, in your own little way, doing a big job. It is not lack of work that gives you strength and energy but it is work that helps you to grow up yourself, and helps others too.

We have a man's job ahead of us, that of raising the lot of millions and millions of people in this country.

Men who talk of Hindu culture miss the basic human culture and show a narrow, barren and limited outlook on life. They are completely against the assimilating and absorbing nature of India's ancient and glorious culture.

It is utter lack of understanding of what India has put forth in the past and what India is. If India has not had that basic culture and basic faith in the past, she would not have survived all these great political upheavals and division that our history shows.

We are meeting on the New Year Day, when practically half of the century is over. We are entering the second half.

These occasions are sometimes significant, because they fix something in the minds, or make us think more of the times to come. On the New Year Day, we must think of what we have done, and more so of what we would like to do in future.

I would take advantage of the occasion by communing with you and conferring with you about some of the matters of serious import which you and I and all of us have to face.

The world is changing fairly rapidly, and in these days of transition, one generation cannot easily understand another. The young and old talk of the same ideas and meet together daily, but their thoughts and urges are different. In spite

1. Address at Nagpur University Convocation at which Nehru was conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, 1 January 1950. From *National Herald*, 2 January 1950.

of the fact that I have tried to keep abreast of the mind of youth in this country, I wonder often if I have succeeded in my effort, or if I am completely adrift and cut off from that mind of the rising younger generation.

There is in India today, perhaps to some extent in other countries as well, a great deal of frustration and of doubt and uncertainty in people's minds.

There is a certain confidence also. But this confidence seems to be surrounded by this feeling of uncertainty. There are all kinds of crime in the world and some young men are attracted to particular ways of life.

But I presume that we realise that no problem is solved by making a lot of noise about it. You and I, and the world, have to face very difficult and serious problems, and it may be that with the best effort in the world, we cannot find an adequate and sufficient answer to these problems.

Nevertheless, the only way to approach them and to think about them is to seriously apply our minds and to consult each other, taking account of the experience of the past and of the spirit of adventure and freshness of youth.

So, we look at India today, two and a half years after her independence. And within three and a half weeks or so now, we shall proclaim the Republic of India.

Undoubtedly, by proclaiming the Republic of India on 26 January, we shall get a great sense of fulfilment in our hearts. But we have a feeling that we have somehow not come up to that expectation which we ourselves had. While, perhaps, we have fulfilled our promises in the sense of keeping to the letter of the word, how far have we fulfilled them in spirit? This doubt creeps upon my mind, and the same doubt will now create in your minds a want of fulfilment, which otherwise you would not have.

And that is perfectly true, because we never envisaged freedom as something legal, only constitutional or just great phrases, but we thought always in terms of raising the standard of living of hundreds of millions of our people, of giving them the necessities of life as well as those other equalities and opportunities that should be provided to every human being.

We have adopted a Constitution, one of whose virtues perhaps is that it is said to be the biggest Constitution in the world. Yet, constitutions are needed; for the people, and if we fail to supply the needs of the people, where shall they find relief? The Constitution has a way of functioning, but we have also to function and we have to decide how to function.

If you look at India today, India is a land of the most magnificent opportunity, not merely in a physical sense, of having all kinds of resources and potential material and having large numbers of human beings, competent and trained, with capacity to do. I use the expression, magnificent opportunity, in another sense also, or in more than one sense. One is that situated as we are, by virtue of geography and of the historical forces that have been working and are working today, inevitably a great burden and a great responsibility is thrust upon India. If you look at the world, there are powerful forces and powerful urges at work, pulling in different

directions. Some people blame this group or that, but none tries to think and face the problems objectively. Instead of getting angry with this or that, we have to understand the problems objectively and try to solve them in the way which we consider right.

In some ways, historically or otherwise, India is so situated at the present moment when it might help in the solution of larger problems. I say this not in any spirit of vainglory or pride because, frankly speaking, I have little pride for any movement in my country. I have a basic or fundamental pride for my country, but for the moment, when I feel what is being done and what is not being done in the country, I have little pride in my country, because I feel that the people are engaging themselves in small issues most of the time, forgetting the great destiny of this country and the great responsibilities that freedom has thrust upon them, of quarrelling among themselves, complaining all the time and blaming somebody or other but not thinking of their own duties and responsibilities.

If we are to be great, we have to function as men and women of some stature. We do not become great by merely shouting, cursing or blaming each other. If we are to be really free, it is not the Constitution framed in Delhi that is going to ensure our freedom. It is the spirit of freedom in you and the sense of responsibility that comes with freedom that is going to keep India free.

I wonder how far you are thinking in these terms. I often wonder when I see young men and young women, and for that matter older men and older women behaving, if I may say so, all the time as very old women.

I am surprised that, in the complicated and fascinating world of today, with a hundred varieties of principles and experience and development, there are people talking in the narrowest, in the most limited way of nationalism and of India. Even after such a long experience, it is amazing that some people cannot understand the problems of life. They think that they do honour to India by what they call Indian or Hindu culture. They repeat it so much and in such a way that the world thinks that there is no culture among us in India. This is however a minor phase. It is only there in the sense that it shows us how limited many minds are.

If we look at India's long history, we can find that India's mind has been free and her eyes have looked far ahead. India has stretched out her hands, mind and thought and influenced others and has been influenced by them and has thus grown richer.

Life changes day by day. The country or the world changes. And if you think that you can stand still and make history, you are mistaken. You cannot do it and in your attempt you fall back. Actually the progress of history puts yourselves back.

What is painful to me is that people, after all the experience they have had of our past history and world history, should think of looking backwards, remain static and think in a narrow way as if India belongs to one group, however big it might be.

Culture does not consist merely of external fashions or the way a nation might

adopt and practise. Is it culture that we should speak a particular language in a particular country? It might be partly so. But, after all, culture is something which has much deeper significance. We might have imbibed it from the past or might have acquired it ourselves, but the fundamental culture is common to humanity.

If you miss that basic culture, which is human culture, no national culture has any foundation left, because if you miss it, the very foundation of all the human beings, how are you going to build on that lack of foundation the same national culture which is the ghost of human understanding and culture? When people talk of culture in this country they know nothing about culture. Their ordinary talk proves that if these people are at any time going to be representatives of India or Hindu culture, then I am sorry for that Hindu and Indian culture.

India's culture, is something deep and abiding which has carried on in spite of terrible disasters through thousands of years. The abiding character of this culture is not slogan-shouting and a limited outlook of life. It is culture, which has affected the races that came here, which is based on toleration of other peoples and their views of life and their methods of living, belief and faith. There is no example anywhere, so far as I know, of this tremendous feeling and way of toleration which India's history shows.

It is an utter lack of understanding of what India has put forth in the past and what India is. If India has not had that basic culture and basic faith in the past, she would not have survived all these great political upheavals and division that our history shows.

We held together and now a strange thing happened. When, politically speaking, we were welded together, a new cry arose to break up that welding on the basis of that culture and to uproot and disrupt all that had been achieved, all in the name of the very culture which in the past kept us together and in the present, is being misused by those who talk in the name of Hindu *Sanskriti*.

When they talk of language, a monstrous growth is being developed for Hindi. I want to make it perfectly clear to you that language is dynamic and it will grow. I do not know whether our language will be affected by the monstrosities of those who call themselves Hindi scholars. I do not think if our range of outlook will be affected by the language. What I mean is this limited outlook, the barren outlook, a merely negative outlook, that faces India's problems, forgetting important things of life, the big things happening in the world. If this outlook spreads in India, though the common people in a democratic state ultimately have their own way, our outlook will become limited in our national life.

So, be clear in your mind which way you look and what you are going to do. India's history shows her amazing power to assimilate and absorb. The people who can assimilate and absorb other ideas say that they have inner strength provided, of course, they are not swept away by any poisonous wind that blows. But if you are strong and if you have a foundation and basis, then keep the windows and doors of your mind always open. Let all winds from the four corners of the earth

blow in to refresh your mind, to give you ideas, to strengthen you and thus not only do you advance but enable the advance of other peoples and other countries.

India once stretched out its ties to South East Asia, the Far East and West, not so much in the military sense, although there were some military expeditions to South East Asia, but essentially in the sense of culture and friendly understanding.

Many valuable manuscripts have been found in Central Asia and in India itself about India's culture and friendly associations with many parts of Asia. Nevertheless, India's mind became static. Asia, which had played important part in cultural and religious advance, suddenly grew so poor in politics that Europe got the upper hand. Asia failed to keep abreast of the inventions of Europe, such as printing, while Europe advanced by leaps and bounds till her people came to Asia and developed their colonial domain. But if Europe came here, it was because she was better in mind and body, not only in military science, but in sciences of peace and art, in everything almost, while we shrunk like frogs in the well.

Europe opened out the sea routes of the world through adventurous people who risked their lives, taking years over journeys to find new lands. There was courage in them, a spirit of adventure, and after generations of effort, they established their empire. No doubt there was imperialism and we fought and we will continue to fight wherever it is, but we have to look at the other side—the courage and adventure that characterised them.

In India we have a magnificent opportunity. In dealing with our problems we have to remember the courage and spirit of adventure of the Europeans. We have got very difficult problems. They are not easy and it is good to face difficult problems because they draw out the best in the human being and in the community.

If some of us are what we are today, if some of us possess some virtue of mind or body or spirit, it is because we have gone through a fairly hard school in our younger days, hard learning and hard experience which has tempered us, steeled us and changed our minds somewhat.

Therefore, if we have hard problems today, let us not be frightened by them. Let us think of them as something that is necessary to temper India, to steel its coming generation, which is too weak and too soft.

We have got before us in India what can be called a man's job, and we want men in the best sense of the word to face it. And you and I and all of us are on trial before the bar of the world. The first big step that we have to take is to raise our own people. I do not wish to meddle in other people's affairs and I do not want other people to meddle in my affairs. That does not mean that I do not want to cooperate or that I do not offer cooperation. That is essential, but ultimately the burden of raising India must obviously be on Indian people.

If other countries can help us, we welcome it. But for us to look to other countries is a weakening and dangerous thought because we will wait for them to do this and not get moving ourselves. So we have this magnificent opportunity, more especially those of you, young men and young women, who have taken your

degrees, have this opportunity, which you may think in terms of individual careers, you must also prepare yourselves to undertake some of the great causes and must consider yourselves as soldiers in a vast army going towards a particular objective.

The first objective for you is to supply the bare necessities of life to the millions of our people, to remove, lessen the great gap which exists in India today between the relatively fortunate and the unfortunate.

The progress of a nation is judged not by the few at the top, although they make a difference of course, if there are great people, but it is judged from the vast number of people in that country. If India is to go ahead, it could only be done, by the labours of millions of the country. The problem before us is how to get the millions to move, to feel that it is their job. If we do not make them succeed, then we have failed, and we cannot do anything great.

Mahatma Gandhi, who suddenly burst upon the Indian scene 30 years ago, did big things that made millions of people conscious of him. Whatever was done in those days was not done by a few people at the top, but in thousands and thousands of villages by the common folk. That was the strength of the Gandhian movement.

It was a man in a village or a small town, an unknown man, that did his little bit, and because millions of such people did their little bits, they could make mountains move. And that is the way a nation progresses.

If you and I and all of us do our little bit, the work could be done. We have to get to the people. We have to make them realise this great adventure that is India today. A magnificent adventure for all kinds of people, good and bad, in a great country.

The biggest job is to raise hundreds of millions, going step by step, building the great house of India, brick by brick, seeing it rise before our eyes, instead of sitting and speaking in our own limited way, criticising this or that person.

The new year is not going to be a soft year. The common normal wish of the New Year's day is to wish all friends a happy New Year. I wish you happiness, of course. But, first of all, there is not too much happiness in this country and certainly there is something deeper than happiness, that is what the soul cries for, that is deeper than superficial happiness.

I can hardly wish you a happy New Year, but I can wish you a year full of hard work and hard labour. Work fills you with satisfaction, enables you to realise that you are in your own little way doing a big job. It is really the work that gives you strength and energy.

On this day, if I may wish you something it is this, that you should have the good fortune to align yourselves with great causes to the best of your ability and faith, not to complain about this or that. And if you do that, you must find satisfaction and contentment which is something infinitely greater than mere superficial happiness.

7. Gandhian Ideals for the Nation¹

There has been a great deal of activity in the country in the last one week. There have been programmes, illuminations and processions in Delhi and in other cities and villages too. And quite rightly so because the 26th day of this month is a great historic occasion for us. There have been numerous other historic occasions, but this particular day has a very special significance in the history of our country. On the Republic Day, it would be quite true to say that, we have fulfilled the pledge that we took twenty years ago on the banks of the Ravi² and reaffirmed it every following year throughout the country. When a pledge or a promise is fulfilled, it generates strength and confidence and joy. So a great change came about in our country and we took a momentous step forward. Sometimes I feel that the people of this country have not yet realised fully the significance of this revolutionary change because they think that no revolution could be achieved without large-scale violence, riots, killing and armed conflict. But this was a peaceful revolution. We took a great step forward but with the difference however that it was done peacefully. So people cannot quite believe that a revolution has taken place.

The emergence of India as a great nation, in Asia and in the world, as a Republic and democracy is a momentous event. It is time that the 15th of August 1947 had already heralded a great transformation. The people of India had proved their strength and since then, no other government has had the right any longer to interfere in our internal affairs. It is true that no government or individual can afford to do whatever they like because there are always other factors to be taken into account. However free and independent a country may be and even if it is the greatest in the world, it cannot afford to ignore realities. But since the 15th of August, there have been no obstacles to our freedom and we have carried on our work without interference. It is true that our country then wore a garb which was a mixture of the old and the new. So we have tried to change that to some extent under the new democratic set up but we have always tried to be objective and realistic. This is an important aspect which I would like you to understand.

The inauguration of the Republic has brought with it greater responsibilities for the people. Perhaps you may already be aware of your rights—little more clearly than is necessary—but it is equally necessary to know your responsibilities. Every individual in a free country has certain responsibilities, otherwise a nation cannot function. If a large number of people fail to fulfil their duties, a country cannot go ahead. If each one expects others to do their duty and fails to do his own duty,

1. Address at a public meeting in connection with Sarvodaya Day on the second death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Ramlila Grounds, New Delhi, 30 January 1950. A.I.R. tapes. (Original in Hindi)
2. See *Selected Works* (first series), Vol. 4, pp. 184-198.

there will be deadlocks. When a country becomes independent, the people must realise that their rights and duties go together. There can be no right without duty and hence our duties towards the world have also increased.

What was our first impulse immediately after independence? It was not to get involved in the complex problems of the world but to put our own house in order and then when we were stronger, to try to be of some service to the world, if possible. Our initial feeling was that we should keep away from world affairs. But whatever our wishes may have been, it was not possible for a large country like ours to keep aloof from world affairs. So we are getting deeply entangled in them day by day. There is no other course open to us. If we do not play a role in world affairs, we would not be fulfilling our true destiny as an independent country.

What is the true meaning of independence? Whatever we do in the domestic sphere we have to evolve a pattern of relationships with other countries. As you know, our brethren are spread out all over the world, in great numbers in some countries and a few in others. We have trade relations, of selling and buying, which entail a thousand different relationships with other countries. Our students go abroad to study. Who is to look after them, look after our trade interests and all the other work in which our country is involved? If we have our ambassadors and representatives in those countries they can do this work on our behalf. If we do not have our representatives, are we to request the English representatives in those countries to do our work? If we do so, how shall we retain our independence? Then it will be said that we continue to live in the shadow of the British. Therefore we have to make arrangements everywhere. Our envoys will express our country's views on important world affairs in the world forums, like the United Nations. So we get involved in this way.

I am telling you all this because the moment a country becomes free, it cannot escape the responsibilities that devolve upon it. We too accepted this position though we did not wish to—because that is one of the consequences of independence. We had to take up a thousand new responsibilities, especially since we have achieved freedom by following Mahatma Gandhi's principles. Everyone's eyes are upon us to see how we now run independent India, whether there is something unique about it or we behave as the other countries do. So there is a special responsibility upon us.

Just four days ago, we celebrated the day which has brought about changes in the rules, laws and status of our country. We celebrated it with some pomp, and rightly so, though we were not very much in favour of wasting money, because when something big happens in the country, it should be marked by grandeur, dignity, and discipline and should not be done haphazardly. So we celebrated it as we ought to have, though on a much smaller scale than in other countries.

That was four days ago. It is equally right and proper that immediately after four days we should observe today—the thirtieth of January—in memory of Mahatma Gandhi and reflect on the special significance of this day. It is not

enough to take his name repeatedly or to praise him or to declare our intention of following him. It would seem that there are many people in this country willing to praise him, but it is doubtful whether they really think about his teachings or try to follow the path shown by him. As it happens often, people feel that it is enough to praise someone and then forget him. This is not such a simple matter because the question before us is to find solutions to the numerous complex problems before us, whether they are internal or external or international. What path are we going to follow in trying to solve them? There can be many views on the subject. But we have learnt a particular way of looking at things in the last thirty years of our association with Mahatma Gandhi. I am talking about a particular way of looking at problems. Leave alone the small things about which he had his own views. But the fundamental point is his way of looking at the big problems. If we fail to understand this aspect and are satisfied with the unimportant aspects, it would not be right. It would not matter if we do not follow him in minor matters so long as we grasp the fundamental principles. It is very important for you and me to think about this on this day.

I should tell you a little about the situation in our country as well as in the world—what are the great problems confronting us, what we are doing and the difficulties inherent in them because so long as the people do not understand these matters fully and extend their full cooperation, you can take it for granted that no government can function effectively. This is not a legal matter, there can be good laws or bad but millions and millions of men do not go by laws alone. Laws merely clear the way for them or create obstacles. As a matter of fact, they have to function according to the dictates of their conscience and stand on their own feet. If the people do not cooperate, the best of laws are useless. If the laws are bad, they can be changed by people who are strong. Mahatma Gandhi taught us even ways of boycotting bad laws by peaceful methods.

The great problem before us is how to take the people of the country in a particular direction—no, I am wrong when I say take—how they should go of their own will in the right direction, because if there is no proper correlation between government activities and the people's wishes nothing of importance can be achieved. Nowadays, the situation is such that if the government opposes something that the people wish to do, there can be clashes and the people cannot go very far without causing major upheavals. If the government wishes to do something and the people fail to cooperate and help, then too the government cannot achieve much or go very far. Therefore it has become important to harness these two energies, the will of the government and the will of the people, together. I am not referring to any great principles at the moment. Take for instance our brethren—what is the phrase? displaced persons—refugees and displaced persons who came here. It was a tremendous problem involving five, six, seven hundred thousand human beings. The government did their best by making rules and regulations and opening large offices to facilitate their rehabilitation. But the matter was so complex

that governmental intervention alone was not enough in solving it. The people must cooperate. Anyhow, to the extent that such cooperation was available, the problem was resolved and wherever it was lacking, there were obstacles. It is not a question of blaming anyone. The problem has to be solved by you and us. It would be very easy for you or me to criticize or accuse one another, but it would be totally futile to do so. We have a task before us and we are not going to complete it by accusing one another. So the question before us is how to complete these enormous tasks before us and it is very important for the people to realize that these can be got done only with the combined effort of the government and the people. Nothing can be achieved if we pull in different directions. Yes, the country will no doubt go along on its own slow momentum. Some work does get done and people continue to function in their own ways. But if you and I want to move fast—and not only do we wish to move fast but the force of circumstances propels us in that direction—then it becomes necessary for all of us to create a new energy which carries all the people forward. I will tell you in my capacity as Prime Minister that it is not enough for me to say that what I or my government do is for the benefit of the people and the country. It would be quite true if I said this but it is not enough. Why? Because you and I have to work together for the benefit of all of us. I should be doing something for your benefit. Only then do we move in the right direction and the responsibility devolves on everyone, apart from me, for I am responsible anyhow—I cannot escape it. Therefore, these big tasks before us should not be done for the people by others, but the people should undertake those tasks themselves. Only then can there be true success.

Very few of you who are present here today may be able to remember the events of the last twenty or thirty years in the country when Mahatma Gandhi had come into the political arena and his coming raised such stormy winds throughout the country that millions of her people were shaken awake and goaded into action. Our intellectual and the educated citizens would shake their heads and argue endlessly about the futility of what was happening. They could not understand what use it was to spin a *charkha* or sweep and do this and that. Their concept of politics was to pass long resolutions in large gatherings and assemblies. But the new politics required everyone to do something. It was very easy to mock at the idea of achieving swaraj by doing menial tasks. But there was a secret behind it. It harnessed the strength and energy of the entire nation to the task. Every individual was to have some responsibility which made them feel that they were soldiers in the fight for freedom and so they had to do something, instead of sitting and applauding from a distance. And so a tempest blew across the country, a peaceful tempest. It was a strange combination which was taking place for the first time in history. It infused fresh life into tired hearts and brought a glow into weakened eyes. A new wave of life seemed to pervade the country. Those of us who were young in those years can still remember the fresh awakening of minds and hearts and the

spontaneous burst of enthusiasm. We forgot everything else that we were doing and became totally involved.

It was not one or two but hundreds and thousands of people in the country who became involved and made an impact on the rest of the country. We were not free then but were arrayed against the might of a large empire. But we were not afraid at all, nor were there any doubts in our minds because we realised that we were being shown a path and a magic formula which could lead only to victory. A great man had come among us and reminded us of great principles which had some influence on all of us and resulted in our doing great things. Had we learnt those lessons better and been more influenced by them perhaps we would have gone even further.

Anyhow, we achieved a great deal. We now meet on a historical occasion when India is taking a new turn in her history by adopting a new garb and a new way of life. So it is proper for us to pause and think on this occasion where we are going and by what yardstick we shall measure our objectives and goals. If you look at the world today, the common trend is for countries to be at war with one another. By war, I do not mean in the military sense, though there are military wars also going on in many places, but the constant talk of war and preparations for it, hatred and fear of one another. The most powerful countries of the world are crushed by fear and so keep piling armaments up. The money that should be spent on the development of the country is wasted on preparations for war and great leaders and statesmen issue statements full of venom and hatred which betray more than a glimpse of fear. That is the atmosphere in the world today which is totally opposed to the principles that Mahatma Gandhi taught us.

So the question before us is whether we should follow the path which is now being trodden by other countries or try to understand Mahatma Gandhi's principles and abide by them. This is something which all of us have to think about because I notice that many people in the country today seem to want to follow the disastrous path being pursued by other countries. We do not remember what the history of the world had been in the last thirty or thirty-five years. There have been two World Wars and both were fought to end all wars and to establish peace and freedom for everyone. But after one disaster, preparations were made for a bigger War. Now a third one seems to be imminent, and I hope it does not come about.

This is the situation in the world today. No great intelligence or wisdom is required to predict that the path which has repeatedly brought ruin and disaster is a wrong one. It is a different matter as to which is truly the right path. But anyone can understand that to follow a path which has repeatedly brought disaster upon the world is not a wise course. It does not require great understanding or intelligence. And yet the world is in a strange confusion. Anyhow, the world is very large. How can we be responsible for the world? The burdens of India are big enough for us and we cannot escape them. You have done me the great honour of putting me in the high office of a Prime Minister and so you and everyone in India has the

right to hold me responsible for all the ills which beset the country and her government. But to some extent you and all the citizens of the country are responsible too. You cannot run away from that. Therefore, we have to think what the right course of action is and whether Gandhiji's principles can help us in any way.

What are Gandhiji's principles? He taught us many things. But I see that often our countrymen spend all their energies in implementing the smaller things and forget his fundamental teaching, his world view. The fundamental issue is how we regard our fellow human beings and how we combat evil and not bow down before it, as Kaka Sahib pointed out just now.³ But Gandhiji's real strength lay in not harbouring bitterness or hatred for anyone. As you know, in the last three years, many events have happened which shook the country to its foundations. Partition took place two and a half years ago followed by riots and killing which ruined millions of human beings. It brought financial and other kinds of ruin in its wake. But the greatest harm it caused was the wound it inflicted on the hearts of the millions in both the countries. That wound does not heal very easily—it takes time. Even now that deep gash has not healed and our minds have become so topsy-turvy that we got diverted from the right path very easily towards bitterness and hatred as a result of the great shock that our minds and hearts have suffered.

So the big question before us at the moment is how to retrieve the situation and turn ourselves in the right direction. We must not be bothered about what others do. It is true that individuals as well as countries are affected by others' actions. It is obvious that we would be deeply hurt if our neighbours come and abuse us. If your neighbour abuses you it is possible that you may abuse him in return and feel justified in having done so. But you will not be considered a well behaved person if you take to wrangling in the streets. The answer to another's wrongdoing is not to do wrong yourself though nowadays it is considered quite normal. Even nations react in this way. Each one feels that if the other country is doing something wrong, it has to retaliate by doing the same. They do not realise that the result of one wrong is another and yet another wrong. It does not stop. The evil keeps multiplying. The problem before everyone is that if evil is not combated, then evil is victorious. So what is to be done? It is wrong to submit to evil. But it is not right to try to combat evil with evil. What is the solution? So in this dilemma, if people decide not to bow down to evil, at least it is a correct decision.

Then Mahatma Gandhi came upon the scene and found a solution to this complicated question. Well, this solution had been thought of earlier by other great men too—but he translated it into the sphere of politics and combined two courses of action. First, not to submit to evil and injustice. Second, retaliation should be not with another evil but with moral force. Now, to combine these two, was a difficult matter, mainly because people could not understand it. He showed us and

3. D.B. Kalelkar presided over the meeting.

we tried our best to follow him and even with that small effort, the country achieved a great success. Now the question is how far we are going to implement it in the politics of the country. To some extent, there is a stumbling effort to follow those principles in the area of our foreign policy. As I said, it is just a stumbling effort. I will not claim that they are being followed very successfully. But at least an effort is being made to keep these ideals before us.

Now, how far are we following those principles, or even making an effort to do so, in our country's internal policies? We talk a great deal but that is not enough. The internal policy of a country involves all her people. It is not enough to make statements from above. The Government can direct its foreign policy on behalf of the people. But how can the Government take on the responsibility to speak for the people in internal matters? Their wishes and opinions have to mould our internal policy. Ultimately no government can go very far if it is isolated from the people's emotions, fears and hopes and desires. So the internal policies rest with the people.

Take, for instance, our attitude towards Pakistan. What should be our relationship with Pakistan? As I told you, there are very deep wounds in the body politic of both India and Pakistan as a result of the happenings of the last two and a half years. There is fear of one another and bitterness. It is difficult to know what to do. Memories are not easily erased and anger flares up quickly. If you read the Pakistani newspapers, you will feel amazed at the hatred and fear in them. There is bitterness and fear on our side too. But I am amazed to see the extent to which it pervades Pakistan. It is almost as if they have gone out of their minds. And there are threats all the time, talk of war, whether it is the Kashmir issue or anything else. There is no attempt at a cool assessment of the situation. Their reaction is one of fear and panic. Now the question is that if a harassed man does something wrong, how should we react? Should we also react in panic and fear, with counterthreats, or should we control ourselves and having made adequate preparations for our defence, try to speak in terms of peace, from a position of strength? Should we try to control the malaise, or contribute to its growth? If it grows, there will be no end to it except that it will cause great harm and loss. Wrong-doing will become rampant everywhere.

Recently I sent a proposal on behalf of our Government to the Government of Pakistan, that we should try to resolve the various outstanding disputes between the two countries. It takes time but, we said, it would be a good thing if we could at least resolve that whenever there is a problem or a dispute, we should adopt only peaceful methods in solving them and that we would not resort to arms. If we resolved to do this, then each issue can be taken up and it does not matter if it gets solved quickly or takes time. If it was finally resolved once and for all, that there would be no wars fought between the two countries, then fear and harassment will no longer haunt the people and the atmosphere will be cleansed so that problems can be resolved with more facility, whether it is the problem

of the refugees or their property which has to be repatriated. There are numerous problems. I had made this proposal to them because it is my belief that it will be advantageous to both sides, and it creates better conditions for an early solution to all our problem.

Well, their reply came in which they said there is no point in convoluted talking. The problems should be solved. I agreed with them entirely. But I had not said anything convoluted when I proposed that we should resolve not to do anything to vitiate the atmosphere. Anyhow, I do not wish to say very much on this subject because talks are going on at the moment. All of us will be very happy if they are successfully concluded because it would be good for both our countries, and I will be happy that there is some effort to follow the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi. But I must tell you that we have to look at all the problems, whether it is the question of Pakistan or anything else, from the point of view of what our own duty ought to be. Duty involves two things. One is that we will not bow down to any wrong threats or danger out of fear. It is certain that we will fight it. But fighting does not mean doing something wrong ourselves. Now, take our country, for instance, you may or may not like everything that our Government does, which is only natural, and you have the right to criticise the Government or put forth your own views. But you must be certain about one thing more and that is that this Government is undergoing a process of change. It came to power on the 15th of August in 1947 and then on the 26th of January this year, we became a Republic and within a year, elections will definitely be held; the first big general elections in which millions of people will vote to elect their Government.

What are the methods that we should adopt for any kind of progress? There are people in certain parts of the country, like Calcutta or some places in the South, who have tried to create a great deal of noise. Calcutta is a very big city with a population of about five million. Two or three hundred or even a thousand out of what five million are like a few drops in an ocean. But they can make a lot of noise and cause harm by their criticisms. Then one often hears of shootings, bomb explosions, burning of trams. Please consider two things. If our country is to move on these lines, who is going to benefit? Even if their policy or goal is right, what is to be achieved by following such a path except that wherever there are a couple of hundred people of such mentality there will be riots and fighting. If they are successful, the country will soon break up into fragments and the man with the stick will hold sway everywhere. No rules and regulations and laws, no development or trade—nothing will be possible. It is obvious that only the stick will rule.

The other thing that bothers me is the foolishness of the whole thing, that a handful of people or a few hundreds or thousands should try to blackmail everyone with guns and bombs and to hold the people and the government to ransom. It is absurd. Do they think that the millions in the country are so scared and helpless that they will run away if a handful of people resort to the use of guns and bombs?

This is the ultimate in foolishness. It almost seems as if some of the youth of the country have lost their heads completely and are going astray. So what is our duty? Our duty is to make it quite clear that whatever may be our policies, we have to follow peaceful methods of working if our country, or any country for that matter, is to go ahead. If we could successfully oppose the British with nonviolent means, it is strange that we should resort to violence against one another. When it was a well accepted thing in the world that it was not wrong to resort to arms and violence to remove a foreign power from the soil of a country, we followed a different path under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. There is nothing more foolish than to abandon that path and resort to violence after becoming independent. People ought to realise that to abandon these principles is the height of stupidity at this stage because though only a handful of people may indulge in such behaviour, numerous people look on and so it is everyone's responsibility, apart from the responsibility of the police and the army. Every citizen of the country has the responsibility of stopping such incidents from happening. Otherwise the country will suffer harm and the great tasks that are to be undertaken will not get done.

So, there are many great problems before us. The political problem has been solved. There are other great problems of foreign policy, social problems, economic problems. As Kaka Sahib pointed out, the economic problems are getting a great deal of attention but not the social evils. I agree entirely with him. But the fact is that it is difficult to isolate the two. Both of them go together. Moreover, to solve social and economic problems we need the cooperation and understanding of the people. They cannot be solved by laws alone. We have drafted our Constitution as a mirror-image of our Republic. But though we have adopted the Constitution, that alone cannot change the face of the country. The law can merely incorporate or record a change. It is the people's hearts and minds which have to change. Therefore, if we wish to bring about great economic or social changes in the country, the people would have to understand them and look at them wisely. They cannot be brought about either by a handful of people making a noise or by passing some laws.

So now that we are embarked on a new chapter of our history, you and I have to wake up to our responsibilities and duties. If you do not like something, you can freely express your opinions. But you must remember that if this country has to progress, we have to follow Mahatma Gandhi's fundamental principles of peace and nonviolence. Secondly, we must avoid hurling abuses at each other either in politics or in any other field. We have to put our entire strength for bringing about the social and economic changes, oppose whatever we do not like but by following civilized methods so that we may adhere as far as possible to the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi.

Please remember that the kind of responsibility that has descended upon our country at this moment has rarely been the lot of any other country. First of all, to look after thirty-five crores of people is a tremendous responsibility and naturally

whatever these thirty-five crores do has an impact on the world. Secondly, there is no doubt that the peoples of Asia and to some extent, the world too, look towards us. In whichever direction we lean, it is bound to affect the world. So we have to plan our future course of action carefully and seriously, with understanding, and implement it firmly and boldly, but at the same time in a gracious and civilized manner. *Jai Hind*.

8. The Arduous Task Ahead¹

Mr Speaker, Sir, as the House is aware, this is a new departure, this debate on the President's Address, and we have no conventions to govern such a debate. The new Republic has to make its own conventions.

I have followed this debate, and we as a Government, have welcomed it, as we always welcome opportunities when Honourable Members can criticise the Government or express their opinion about various activities of the Government. But I have noticed that in the course of this discussion a large number of matters have been raised or referred to. In fact, the discussion has been to some extent on the lines of the normal budget discussion. Now, it is not for me, Sir, to limit the discussion in any way or to restrict it, but I would suggest, for your consideration, Sir, and for the consideration of the House, that perhaps the purpose of this debate at the beginning of the session, is somewhat lost if it is treated in the same way as a budget debate and all manner of details and relatively minor matters are also raised in it. The essential nature of this initial debate at the beginning of a session is to give an opportunity to the Opposition in the House to raise major questions of policy, in fact, to raise something which is tantamount to a vote of no-confidence in the House. A new House meeting together, a new Government, or the old government carrying on in a new session, wants to give this opportunity to the House to decide then and there, whether they approve of their government and its major lines of policy or not. Now, if that is converted into a debate on a large number of minor issues, the major issues are rather clouded, obscured, and therefore, perhaps, the principal object of such a debate is not served. There is a difficulty I know, here in this House, because the Opposition is very small in numbers and it is therefore right and fair that a larger latitude be given.

1. Speech in Parliament on the President's Address, 3 February 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

Now, it is not easy for me within the allotted time to deal with the multitude of questions that have been raised in the House. I shall only deal with some major matters and refer to some other matters briefly. One Honourable Member complained that the debate was limited to two days. Well, it has gone a little beyond two days. But I was a little surprised at that complaint because we are not taking away from the right of the House but we are adding two days for the first time to this kind of general discussion, and, if the House wants, of course, they can always have a discussion on a specific issue if it is important enough. But, a general discussion extended rather indefinitely tends to lose significance, the points at issue get lost. Everybody speaks, every subject is raised and it may give a certain satisfaction to an Honourable Member or his constituents that a certain subject has been mentioned, but the significance of that debate is lost.

Now there are one or two relatively small matters to which I shall refer right at the beginning. One or two Honourable Members of this House complained that a sufficient number of women have not been returned to this House. That of course is not a matter which concerns Government policy, or on which we can say much, except that I would like to express my entire concurrence with that complaint and my firm opinion that women have not had a fair deal in this country; further, that in the future, it is a matter of serious consequence for this country and for this House as to whether a sufficient number of women are returned or not. May I add, that in the experience we have had in foreign countries, in our delegations, in other appointments of women, say in the United Nations, appointments made by the United Nations itself, I cannot think of a single instance, where that appointment has not justified itself. And I can think of many instances where the appointments of men have not justified themselves. I am speaking from a good deal of experience. I can tell this House, that the women who have gone abroad on our delegations and other work, have, each one of them, raised the credit of India and left a very good impression there.

Then, referring to another matter, an Honourable Member, Mr Tyagi,² took exception to the ceremonial that was observed when the President came in. He thought that it was too English for his liking and that we should have some *shankh* blowing or some other ancient instrument playing when he came in. Whether he meant it seriously or not, I do not know. But it does raise an interesting point for this House's consideration and that is this. We are anxious and eager to have our own customs, our own ceremonials but when we adopt a certain practice or ceremonial, which comes from foreign countries, it has a certain meaning, I suppose. We have in this Constitution, that we have adopted, followed very largely the

2. Mahavir Tyagi.

practice of foreign countries, and more specially that of the British House of Commons, British Parliament. We have in our judicial system adopted a good deal from abroad. Would the Honourable Member who complained, like us, if I may give an instance, to raise armies after the model of the *Mahabharata* or modern armies, or use weapons which were used five hundred years ago or weapons that are used now? I say this because there is a tendency in this country, in the name of nationalism, to promote obscurantism.³ The Honourable Member may take objection, but the Honourable Member, I regret to say, merely gives an example of what I am saying; I repeat what I have said and I repeat it with emphasis. I referred to the times of the *Mahabharata* and the arms used in old times. I am not referring to the great doctrines of the *Mahabharata*. So, the Honourable Member need not at all get agitated about any discourtesy meant to the *Mahabharata*, because that is very very far from my mind or anybody's mind. But the point is that we get mixed up between the great things of the past and the minor trappings of the past, and if we get mixed up between the great things of the past and the minor trappings, the great things suffer, the minor trappings remain minor anyhow. Therefore, we must be careful about this.

India has suffered sufficiently in the past by being wrapped up in minor trappings and forgetting the way the world has gone on ahead. India became a slave country and a conquered country because it did not keep pace with the world and if we forget that lesson today we shall again fall back, because nationalism is a vital force, is a great force, and if we give up any part of the genius of our people and the basic traditions of our people, we lose a great deal thereby, we become rootless, that is true. At the same time, nationalism often covers a multitude of sins and multitude of throw-backs on something that is dead and gone, and it is well that we recognise that and not allow ourselves to be thrown back to something that has no fitness in the present age. What is communalism in its larger essence, except a throw-back to some medieval age, to a medieval state of mind, to medieval habits, to medieval slogans? So when we talk about foreign customs and Indian customs, let us preserve every single Indian custom, every single Indian way of thought but let us not go back to something that has no application to the modern world. The President came in. There was no blowing of the trumpets or anything. He came in, just step in step. Does Mr Tyagi object people walking in step? Does Mr Tyagi object?⁴ Does any Honourable Member object to military officers accompanying our President? Then do the Honourable Members object to our military officers wearing the uniform they put on? Do they expect them to go about in the dress I am wearing today or in the dress some other Honourable Members are wearing? I do not know, why the Honourable Members are thinking of *tilak*

3. K. Hanumanthaiya raised an objection here.

4. Balkrishna Sharma intervened to say that the "hideous" head-dress of the men who followed the President was objected to.

and *arati*.⁵ I say that in the precincts of the House, I do object to them; outside, I welcome them; in the precincts of the House, I would certainly object to them. That is what I am venturing to say, in this House, I am deliberately placing for the consideration of the House certain considerations which move this Government, and move the Prime Minister of this Government, and it is for the House to choose their Prime Minister and their Government.⁶

The House will observe how certain observations made by me which, normally speaking, I take it, would be admitted as obvious, yet somehow raise a deal of excitement and passion. I have stated, and I refer again, because this thing will occur again and again as the President will come again. The President will come accompanied by his A.D.C.s, his military officers. If the A.D.C.s and military officers are to accompany the President, are they to wear their military uniform or put on a special uniform for the occasion when they come to this House accompanying the President? Is our army to put on some different uniform and different dress? One has to be logical about it. One has to think these things out really. We can and we should consider what new customs we should introduce wherein we should part from the old and have something new, but I hope we introduce nothing in this House or in this country which excuses sloppiness which is the bane of this country and looseness and sloppiness lead inevitably to inefficiency and to many other evils.

We live in an age where we have to be efficient whether it is in the political plane or the economic plane or any other plane. We are criticising this Government, for lack of efficiency and may be that criticism is right. I admit it. The Government, in many ways, ought to be more efficient. But all these qualities of efficiency etc., come in a certain context, in a certain milieu, in a certain environment. You cannot have an environment and a milieu, which is totally lacking in efficiency, which is sloppy in the methods of doing work, generally in the methods you carry on activities and then expect efficiency to rise like phoenix out of the ashes of inefficiency. Therefore, we have to be clear about our ways of life and ways of functioning in the political, economic and social domain.

As Honourable Member talked about revolutionaries, I think, it was, my Honourable friend, Mr Tyagi. "We should have a government of revolutionaries." I should very much like to know Mr Tyagi's definition of a revolutionary, because a revolutionary has been defined in many ways. In the old days possibly, a normal definition of revolutionary activity would be an activity directed against a foreign government.⁷ I accept that, I agree. I am flattered and gratified by this, and may I say, that I entirely agree with Mr Tyagi. But being a revolutionary at a time when we have to oppose a foreign imperialistic government, one can understand that,

5. Mahavir Tyagi asked whether *tilak* and *arati* were objected to by Nehru.

6. Balkrishna Sharma remarked: "We have chosen the Prime Minister in spite of our differences."

7. Tyagi said: "I consider you as the ideal revolutionary."

it is a clear issue. Therein too, there may be differences in the sense that one man takes to the bomb and calls himself a revolutionary, although his action may actually have a counter-revolutionary consequence in the true mechanics of revolution. Yet, by some strange misuse of language, the bomb-thrower has been called a revolutionary. I call him a counter-revolutionary. But true, here is a test of revolution against a standing political order represented by a foreign government. Now that foreign government has gone, and we face other problems. What is the test of revolution now? Because, you see, it is patent that many of the people who were revolutionaries in that old sense of the word, previously, are no longer revolutionaries in any modern sense of the word; in fact some of them may possibly be classed as actual reactionaries. So it becomes difficult to understand and define these terms, except in a modern context, in a new context, political or economic or social, call it what you will. And merely because a person was a revolutionary as against the British Government, therefore, he is necessarily a revolutionary today, does not follow, and Honourable Members know very well, some people who were our colleagues in the old days, intimate colleagues in the fight against the British, are encouraging sabotage in the country. Take some of the communists. They were our colleagues some time back; today they are carrying out an anti-social policy of destruction and promoting chaos. They were brave revolutionaries. There are others who are our colleagues, who are opposing us. There are others, again, who may not be opposing us on the political plane but in the economic plane they hold different views. Here in this House how many views are represented in the economic plane? So it is difficult to talk about as to who is a revolutionary and who is not, till you define your terms.

Then some other matters, they are important but I shall refer to them rather briefly. There is the question of food. I think the Honourable Member, Mr Anthony, hinted at the fact that the target we have laid down for having self-sufficiency in food is not likely to be achieved, and therefore we had better advance it by two or three years. I do not know where he got his figures or his information from. I might inform him that we are going to achieve that and we will achieve by that date. I might inform him that it just does not matter what his informants may say. I am convinced, and so far as I am concerned I am determined to achieve it. And what is more, I might inform him, that we have gone a good way in that direction today. That is, I speak not merely in terms of hope and expectation, but in terms of actual achievement today, that is, such facts and figures as we have got, we are making good progress on the food front. Naturally, we would like it to be faster and better. Unfortunately, there has been a lack of winter rainfall in Madras and other places. In spite of that, we are doing fairly well, and we hope to do better. In the next year, I have not the exact figures before me, but that is in this year, 1950, the amount of food we propose to import is considerably less than half of last year's. Sometime or other, the House will be informed of the exact figures by the Food Minister, but it is much less and I have no doubt that the year after the next, it will be much less still.

Then, reference is made, many Honourable Members referred to controls and expressed their strong disagreement with the continuation of any controls. Now, this is not the time to discuss this question of controls. It is a complicated and difficult matter, which this House, I presume, will discuss sometime or other. I should like to say this that while the inconvenience and even the corruption due to controls is obvious, there is another and a very important aspect of this question which no responsible Government can possibly ignore. The last time we withdrew controls, well, something in the nature of minor disasters followed. It may be, that if we are prepared for a relatively long term of facing disasters and crises, we will right ourselves in the end. But it is not an easy matter to face this crisis for a year or two running just in the hope of adopting ourselves and I am quite convinced that our removal of the controls—was it two years ago,—was a wrong thing. We made a mistake, our Government made a mistake in doing it. If we had not removed them, we would have been much better off.⁸ And now for us to take a risk,—I am not talking about all controls, of course, some may be removed; I am talking about the basic things and especially food. It is a most dangerous thing for us to play about with food prices and allow them to rise. On the one side, we make an attempt to lessen prices of the basic necessities, specially food, etc. On the other, if we take the slightest risk the thing goes up and people with anti-social instinct profit by it. I do not think whatever credit this government may have it will be infinitely lessened. However, these are matters for careful consideration by Government and by this House.

Sugar was referred to. I might inform the House that the Tariff Board report on sugar⁹ has been received by the Government and it is going to be considered very soon. It is just a brief document of about a thousand pages. Oh! I am sorry, it is only 450, but in size about that fat. It is difficult suddenly to grasp it.

Now, two or three other matters, I will not deal with. Criticism has been made about, well, on the subject of coordination, efficiency. These are very vital matters but these are not matters of policy. That is to say we all agree, that there should be economy, there should be efficiency, there should be coordination. There is no disagreement. We may fail in bringing it about. We can discuss measures how to bring it about, but it is not a matter of disagreement of policy.

8. When essential commodities were in short supply, prices rose. This led to controls and inflation. In spite of controls, however, scarce commodities continued to go into the black market, producing greater scarcity and a still further rise in prices. It was argued that the controls, alleged to be the cause of so much corruption, should be lifted. Mahatma Gandhi himself was a strong advocate of their abolition. But when the controls were actually lifted, the Government was faced with the problem of soaring prices and had to reimpose the controls.
9. The price of sugar had been steadily increasing because the merchants were hoarding their stocks and indulging in speculation after signing a voluntary price control agreement. The Tariff Board recommended the discontinuance of protection of sugar alongwith some other industries.

Then, again, take the question of displaced persons, the refugees. There again, broadly speaking, there is no disagreement. There may be a disagreement as to the method of approach, as to the method of doing something. But it is the responsibility of the Government and of the country to provide for them, to rehabilitate them, to help them in every way.¹⁰ But apart from questions of limitations of resources, money etc., there are a large number of other factors. I think and hope, the House will agree with me, that in spite of our financial condition, the Government have not really spared money in this matter. We could have naturally, if we had funds like the U.S.A., thrown about much vaster sums. But I feel, honestly, that we, that is the Government have been in error in the approach to this problem, right from the beginning. Money was required; money is required, but money is a secondary factor after all. It is the human approach that is required on the part of the refugees, on the part of those who deal with the refugees. It is the approach of work that is required. People talk too much about loans and monetary help, and some people say "put on a new tax for the refugees." I have come to the conclusion, that while money may, no doubt, relieve them, so far as the approach of rehabilitation goes, it is not a question of money so much but of other qualities that we have to produce in ourselves, if you like, and in the refugees. You will not rehabilitate a man by giving two hundred rupees or two thousand rupees. The average person thinks in terms of opening a little shop. Well, some shops may go on. Most shops probably may not go on. You cannot just add on thousands of shops all over. You can only think of rehabilitation ultimately, in terms of productive effort, that is, adding to the wealth of the country, adding to the wealth of the individual concerned. Now, I do not think we as a Government...¹¹

I am saying that, I think, that we as a Government have not. In the first couple of years or a year and a half, we were rather overwhelmed with this problem. We did not perhaps, lay that stress on productive effort as we should have done. We want to do it now. We try to do it now, and we find enormous difficulties on the other side. Now I do not wish to be unfair because I think a very large number of the displaced persons have, well, shall I say made every effort. They have played the game. They have done so. I am not criticising them in the least. Where they have been given a chance, they have done remarkably well. Unfortunately, a considerable number think in terms not of effort. We have offered work to them, solid work, which will earn them some money and they have refused that work and they simply sat there and asked for doles, asked for loans of money, when

10. Up to December 1949, more than six million people from West Pakistan and about two million from East Bengal had entered India as refugees. The maintenance of each displaced person cost about one rupee a day and the Government's expenditure amounted to one million rupees daily. Up to the end of 1950, Rs.322.7 million had been spent on relief in camps.

11. H.V. Kamath interrupted to ask whether the Government could find work for them all.

we are giving them good solid work. So that is the difficulty. It is not the difficulty of this country. Wherever this refugee problem has arisen, the same difficulty has come into existence. And the refugees' problem is an old problem in Europe and in other parts of Asia.

Now, may I come to some of the major issues—foreign policy. There has been very little criticism, so far as I could gather, of our foreign policy, except in so far as it applied to Pakistan. So I need say little about our foreign policy. I would like to say this, however, even though—and the House will forgive me for referring to it, being as I happen to be Foreign Minister, that the record—the general record of our foreign policy, in the last two years and a half since we attained independence, is a very satisfactory record judged from the normal standards of the status of the nation in external affairs, in international affairs. There is no doubt that India for a variety of reasons, not merely because of the policy pursued, but for other reasons also, stands very high in the scale of nations in regard to international affairs today. Now, as the House knows, we have adopted a policy, which has been variously described, as one of “neutrality” or “non-alignment” etc. I dislike the word “neutrality” because there is a certain passivity about it, and our policy is not passive. When some countries or some critics of ours say that our policy should side with this group or that group, and we are criticised as sitting on the fence, I do understand what they say but well, I do not appreciate it at all.

A country's foreign policy ultimately emerges from its own traditions, from its own urges, from its own objectives, and more particularly from its recent past. Now, India has had a recent past, which has powerfully affected it in the last 20 or 30 years. We tried even when we were not a government, and we were in opposition, or a party conducting revolutionary activity, we tried to lay down the basis of our foreign policy then. I submit that within the limits of a changing situation, we have tried to follow that policy which we as a Congress laid down years ago. Apart from that, it seems to me extraordinarily presumptuous on anybody's part to ask me to join this bloc or that bloc. Am I so insignificant or is my country so small or so lacking in importance in world affairs that it cannot say what it wants to say, that it must ditto to this or that? Why should my policy be the policy of that country or this country? It is going to be my policy and an Indian policy and my country's policy.

It is true that no policy is isolated from others' policies. We cooperate with other countries. Naturally, we seek the cooperation of others. We have our likes and dislikes. In regard to our likes, of course, they help us to cooperate but in regard to our dislikes, they come in the way. But because we want to be friendly with other countries, we tone down our dislikes deliberately. Because if you look round the world today, the world is blinded by fear and hatred. It is an extraordinary position, and it is becoming more and more difficult for any country to view any subject, any problem objectively, because of this enveloping fear and hatred, and all this leads them to violence and preparations for violence and wars. What this

will lead to I cannot say. But I still think, that it is a possibility that grave disasters and catastrophes in the world might be avoided, not by the efforts of India alone, but there are people, thinking on these lines in other parts of the world, earnest people of goodwill and it is a possibility that it might be avoided. Because the alternative is this type of world war which may come. It is so terrible to contemplate that whatever the result of that war may be, one thing is dead certain, that most things that we value in life in every country and in every part of the world, will vanish. Whether you call yourself a communist or a socialist, or any "ist", the very basis of progress and civilised existence will probably be destroyed for a generation or two. Maybe some third or fourth generation may rise from the ashes of that war. So that any person who thinks at all earnestly about these problems must come to the conclusion that every effort must be made to prevent this great catastrophe descending upon the world. I am not vain enough to imagine that any efforts that our Government may make will make a vital difference to world affairs. Yet, every little effort counts and in any event, I don't see why our efforts should not be in that direction, and why we should take it for granted that war is inevitable and therefore, give up all attempts to prevent war. So, our foreign policy has been aimed at that.

Then there is another question about our foreign policy, that is our association with the Commonwealth of Nations. Some Honourable Members have criticised that.¹² May I beg the House to consider this question or those Members who objected to consider this question separated and isolated from past sentiment. Because I do feel it is the past sentiment that governs this more than the present situation. People imagine, presumably some people, that by our association with the Commonwealth some kind of restricting, limiting factor comes in our activities, political, economic, foreign, domestic, whatever it is. Now, that is completely unjustified. There is no limiting factor. By our joining the United Nations, certain limiting factors came in, as they must come in if you join any organisation of that type. You join, let us say, the International Monetary Fund, certain limiting factors come in immediately you join an international organisation. But in our association with the Commonwealth, there is not an iota of a limiting factor. As the House knows well, the Constitution does not mention the Commonwealth; it is not a constitutional issue. It is an agreement, a gentleman's agreement between the countries of the Commonwealth and us, which we deliberately, after serious thought, entered into, because we felt that it was to our advantage. And after the experience of some months of it, I am more than ever convinced that it is to our advantage.

I think an Honourable Member said something about devaluation. Now whether devaluation was good or bad has nothing to do with our being in the Commonwealth.

12. India joined the Commonwealth in April 1949 because this seemed advantageous both from the national point of view and that of world peace. Many members criticised India's association as revealing an inclination towards the western bloc.

We may carry out any policy we like, whether we are in the Commonwealth or we are not in the Commonwealth. When people think of the Commonwealth influencing us in regard to our policies, may I suggest to them that it is also possible that we may influence others greatly too in the right direction.

Then reference is made to certain countries like South Africa, where a policy is being pursued which brings it into conflict with us, in various phases of activity. Now, questions are often asked of me, did you consider the South African issue or the Pakistan issue in the Colombo Conference or somewhere else? And my answer invariably is, that we did not, because deliberately, we do not want to make the Commonwealth Conference a kind of tribunal or a kind of superior body to decide our issues. We are independent countries. We deal with each other directly. The House knows that by our being in the Commonwealth, there has been no difference whatever in regard to our dealing with South African issue. There it is. If we are out of the Commonwealth, it will make no difference. It might to some extent, in some ways, make it slightly more easy for us to deal with each country in the Commonwealth as that country deals with us, whatever it may be. We are absolutely on a reciprocal and equal basis. Now one principal reason, apart from the general reason, that there is absolutely no object in our breaking an association which might help and which certainly cannot hinder, and which helps also in the larger context of world peace, there is one major reason for our being in it. And that is a very large number of Indians living abroad in what are called British colonies or dependencies. I am not talking about the self-governing or the independent countries of the Commonwealth, but in other places. By our remaining in the Commonwealth, their position is a better position; otherwise they have to make a sudden choice, they have to break with India or they have to break with that country. It would have put millions of our peoples in a very difficult position and it is totally unnecessary for them to be put in that position. So that, that is another advantage.

Then coming to Pakistan and our relations with Pakistan, many Honourable Members have referred to this and have expressed their opinion that we have been too gentle, we have indulged in appeasement, we have not been firm enough and so on and so forth. Well, it is a little difficult to consider a vague indictment of this kind. One can discuss specific matters and give an answer. It is difficult because first of all, one has not got a grip on a particular point, and secondly, in the very delicate state of relations between India and Pakistan during the last two and a half years, everything that has happened does not see the light of day. What we do, we do not shout from the house-tops, and therefore, sometimes all the facts are not before the public. But, I do not wish to take shelter behind that argument. Most of the facts are before the public and before this House. Now I should like the House and Honourable Members, if not now, at a later stage, and I welcome their coming to me and telling me what their views are, to tell me about any specific matter, what they think should be done and what they think should not be done.

This vague idea of being firm does not help. The Cabinet has the clearest ideas and is acting according to them.¹³ Naturally according to its own ideas. It is because you are criticising the Cabinet's ideas, that I am asking Honourable Members to help me in regard to any specific matter. If you permit me, I shall go on and explain myself a little further on this issue. This partition brought about, it was from every point of view, a very unnatural thing. Well, we accepted it and we continue to accept it and will act accordingly. But it created, not so much the partition perhaps but the events that happened after the partition, it created deep wounds in India and in Pakistan—among the people I am talking about—and those wounds will take sometime in healing, as the President said in his address. We have to deal with vast masses of people in India and Pakistan. Now, how are you to deal with this question?

Honourable Members often point out that in Pakistan wrong methods are employed, wrong things are done, they have not followed a straight policy. I agree. Would Honourable Members suggest to this Government also not to follow a straight policy in regard to Pakistan? I want that question to be considered and answered straightly. Because, I am quite convinced in my mind that whatever policy Pakistan may follow we should not follow a crooked policy, and I am convinced and I say that, not merely, on grounds of high principle but from the narrowest grounds of sheerest opportunism. If I have gained any experience in the last thirty or forty years of my public life, it is this, and certainly if I learnt any lesson from the great master who taught us many things, it is this that a crooked policy does not pay in the end. It may pay temporarily.¹⁴ I am not, I know that, I am not suggesting that anybody is asking me to do so.¹⁵

I was venturing to say that anything that is in the nature of a crooked policy does not pay in the end—I do not suggest how could I, that any Member is suggesting such a policy—but there are people outside the House who do suggest it and that is why I mentioned it. There are people and there are organizations who are suggesting it. Some of the things they suggest, some of these communal and other organizations, like the Hindu Mahasabha seem to me the stupidest of things. But there is still a market place for stupidity and cupidity in the country. I want, therefore, to make it perfectly clear that these suggestions, which according to me are crooked suggestions and come out of crooked minds, will not be accepted by us, whatever the consequences. Therefore, it is not to this House for the moment that I was addressing myself but to other people outside, who say things irresponsibly, which affect our foreign policy, which give a cause to the people on the other side of the border and the frontier, if I may say so, to misbehave more.

13. Lakshmi Kant Maitra remarked: "According to them?"

14. Some Members said: "Nobody wants that."

15. One Member said: "Please have just the policy necessary for the country at this moment—for the safety and security of the country."

We are a great country, and this House has great authority over great matters of State, domestic and foreign. What this House says or what an Honourable Member in this House may say, is carried to far countries, and other people judge of our country, by that statement. Therefore, we have to speak with a great deal of responsibility. Our lightest utterance may have special meaning for other countries.

We have tried, and in spite of a certain failing on my part, I speak rashly occasionally, I try to restrain myself, and I have tried in regard to this matter, foreign affairs or Pakistan, to speak with as much moderation as I could. Because I was convinced that while on the one hand, we must be strong enough and firm enough in our policies and in our preparations—whatever they may be, whether they are military or other—while we must not give in on any point which we consider wrong, whatever may happen, still our attitude should be restrained and moderate and friendly. Now, whether it is possible to combine the two or not, it is difficult. But anyhow, that long training tells us that, and that was the training that we got even when we were fighting a powerful imperialism and risking everything in that fight. That is to say, not to bow down to evil, to be firm with it, not to compromise with it, to prepare to meet it on every front and yet to be gentle in your appearance, to be moderate in your language, and not to meet it on its own level of evil. Therefore, and I think, perhaps, some Honourable Members may mistake our soft language sometimes or our moderate approaches sometimes, for lack of firmness. But why not examine the actions? See what the actions are, whether they are in the plains and mountains of Kashmir or whether they are somewhere else, examine those actions. And again, may I beg of you to consider, because here we are facing a new situation, at any rate a new development, to which my honourable friend drew attention yesterday, between East and West Bengal, this migration. Now that is a bad thing, and everything should be done to check it on the one hand, and to help those who come over on the other hand, I agree. But behind it lies something much bigger. I mean to say this kind of thing grows. Obviously, it may lead to disastrous consequences. Now, should we in a moment of anger say or do things which precipitate further crises and further disasters? I submit to this Honourable House that a responsible government should not do that. It should take steps, of course, every effective step, but steps are not shouting aggressively in a loud language. That is not. Unfortunately, in the modern world, the old traditions of diplomacy have been forgotten. Diplomacy in the old days may have been good or bad, but it was courteous at least. They did not curse each other in public. Today the new tradition is to carry on this verbal warfare in the strongest language in public. Well, may be that is better than actually fighting. But that leads to fighting or may lead to fighting. So I submit that in our relations with Pakistan, we have, first of all, to follow this policy of firmness and adequate preparation, but always adopt the friendly approach.

And again, there can be no doubt, I have no doubt, and Honourable Members surely can have no doubt, that India and Pakistan, as they are situated, geographically

and otherwise, and with all our backgrounds, we cannot carry on for ever as enemies. It is impossible. Catastrophe after catastrophe will come, either we will wipe each other off or one will wipe the other off and then suffer the consequences. It is just not possible. We are passing through trouble and crisis may last another year, another two years, three years, I do not know. It is largely due to a certain fund of hatred and violence accumulated during the pre-partition days. We are inheritors of that. We have to face that. Now ultimately some time or other—forget Governments, our Government and the Government of Pakistan, think of the people, the millions who live next door to each other—those millions of people will have to come together, will have to cooperate together, will have to be friends. There is no doubt about it. Now, let us think of that future, which may not be very distant and let us not do things today which may lead to generations of rivalry and conflict. We have to think of that future. Therefore, I beg of this House to consider this matter.

We have, as the House knows, offered to make a joint declaration with the Government of Pakistan for the avoidance of war. Some Honourable Members may think it is a gesture of weakness. Well, I am sorry if they think so, because it has nothing to do with weakness. It is a gesture of strength. We know exactly how strong we are. We know exactly up to what limit we are going to, well, permit things to happen, after which we do not permit them to happen. We made that offer because we were convinced that if that was agreed to, that would lay the foundation of a gradual improvement, not sudden, and a settlement of various questions. I want Members to think of any question, which they want to be decided by war and war alone. Now I can understand war in the context of defence. I do not wish to understand war in the context of aggression, and I want to make that perfectly clear on behalf of myself and my Government. We have fallen far enough, from what might be called the Gandhian ideology, but still to some extent it influences us. But it is not a question of Gandhian ideology or of any other ideology. But it is a question of looking at the world today with clear eyes. Does the House remember one fateful sentence of Mahatma Gandhi? When he warned he said something to the effect that “the countries of the world are looking at each other with blood-shot eyes; keep your eyes clear.” So, I beg, I try, insofar as I can, to keep my eyes clear. When I look at this scene, whether it is the world scene or the Indian scene or the relations of India and Pakistan, because nothing good comes out of blood-shot eyes, no clear thinking, and no clear action. And if it is imagined, as one Honourable Member hinted at, that people grow weak because we do not have blood-shot eyes or we do not urge them to war all the time, well, that is a policy, not only a wrong policy but a policy of despair. If we can only keep up to a certain level, by being given a strong drink and intoxicating words and we collapse without the rum or the intoxicating words, well, then, sometime or other we will collapse when we have not got it. Therefore, it is well to be prepared for all contingencies, whether in the military way or any other way. It is well to be firm, it is well not to bow down to evil. But it is also well always to be conciliatory,

always to stretch out your hand to those who would hold it, because thereby the government may not hold it, but the people see that your hand is outstretched, not only the people of the other country but the people of the world see it, and thereby you add to your strength.

In regard to Kashmir, I shall not say much, because the matter is before the Security Council. The House knows that I have been intimately connected with the development of affairs in Kashmir in many ways, and it has given me more anxious moments than almost any thing else. I suppose, in minor matters, we may have erred here and there, but in major matters, I am quite convinced that what we have said and done has been right and I am not sorry for any major action that we have taken in the last two years and a quarter in regard to Kashmir.

Now, finally, I may deal with perhaps the biggest question that faces us today, that is the economic position. That again I am not going to deal with at all fully because it is a vast subject, and it will come up for your consideration in various ways. The House will have noticed the reference to the formation, the constitution of a Planning Commission in the President's address. Of course, the Government had previously on many occasions assured the House that such a Commission would be constituted. So it is nothing new, and indeed it might well be said by the Honourable Members that there has been some delay in it. Well, we attach a great deal of importance to this and I hope that with this Planning Commission and with the other steps that we shall take, we shall be in a somewhat better position to handle our problems. There has been often a kind of argument against capital, against labour and, much is said about what the capitalists do or do not do. Now, I should like this House to consider this question, apart from the personal equation that capitalists are good and capitalists are bad. As a matter of fact, the state of India is such today that capitalism is very immature here. It has not developed as in the other countries of the world. But the point is, our capitalists are the product of our history, of our economic system and the rest of it. They are not to blame. You change your system if you like, gradually or rapidly. It is no good blaming them, but I will say this that our capitalists, good and bad, and many of them, I have no doubt, are very patriotic. They do lack what I call a social outlook. If I may extend that, it is not the capitalists only but the non-capitalists also lack the social outlook. We talk a great deal about doing good to the masses. When I say we, I am not referring so much to the Honourable Members of the House, but people in the country. And yet, I would beg to say with all respect, that we have not, as a whole, developed that social outlook yet, which if I may say so, is a common factor of communism and socialism and even capitalism in advanced countries. Without that basic thing, we talk about bringing about changes at the top by sudden laws. Well, let us have the laws, by all means, which help, but ultimately laws are a product of a nation's thought, a nation's customs, activities, progress, and where it has reached. You have all the laws in the world to make

people honest, you have got criminal code; you got this; and yet you talk about corruption, rightly. Well, it is not the lack of law that leads to corruption but something else. So it is not the lack of law that possibly leads to this lack of social outlook and social sense in many of us but something else and we have to develop it.

We have to consider our economic policies carefully, and more from the point of view of which economic policy helps in the development of social outlook and which helps in the hindrance of the anti-social outlook. That I think is the test. You can't change things, change millions of people suddenly, it can't be done, however rapidly you may progress. You may, if you like, destroy what you have got and have a clean slate. Well, sometimes that has to be done. But the process of destruction means a process of utmost misery for long periods of time, may be generations. It is not worthwhile, unless it is forced down upon you. Therefore, we want to make progress without destruction, except destroying something that is bad and keeping the rest going.

So, we have this vast problem before our country. The problem of raising three hundred and forty or fifty million people, raising them economically, certainly raising them educationally, but raising them in so many unconscious ways, developing a new outlook among them. And it is all integrated together. It is not merely an economic problem. It is not merely a political problem. It is a social problem and it affects our lives in a hundred ways. And therefore, I am surprised sometimes to see an Honourable Member who wants the most radical social reforms, economic reforms, economic changes, nationalization and socialization, yet, in another context, exhibiting an outlook which seems to me completely opposed to that economic reform, because life is an integrated whole. You cannot separate it into bits.

Therefore, this House has to face this tremendous responsibility, and this new Republic begins full of strength and vigour and hope and earnestness, and at the same time with these tremendous problems before it. I am sure, that if we apply ourselves in a spirit of concerted effort and in a spirit of earnestness and understanding to these problems, we shall go some way to achieve success.

9. Social Overtones in Planning¹

General Williams² and Members of the Institution of Engineers, Indian engineers should give their plans a social outlook. A social outlook means trying to absorb people in work. Your approach to the problems of reconstruction should not be entirely financial. You must plan for the social benefit of the people. A project should be commended even if it is not perfect from the business point of view but is capable of providing employment to many and resulting in a more equitable distribution of wealth. Such an attempt at planning for social benefit is being made at present in England. You should bear in mind social objectives and targets while planning for the country's future.

Labour is wide awake and unemployment is not tolerated in any civilised country. It is necessary to plan the development of the country in a manner that will satisfy the common people's necessities of life. In the order of things in this country, production of food must come first. The planners of our country should emulate the British Government in their approach to similar problems here.

The engineers should try to get the active cooperation of the people. If you can assure them that you are working in their interest, you win their confidence, you will find them willing to put up with hardships and work out your plans.

The problem of reconstruction in India has a psychological aspect also which cannot be ignored. The tendency among the people here is to get others to do the work rather than do it themselves. No large-scale rebuilding can take place unless this mentality is changed. In Russia one of their great achievements has been to get the people in general to take personal interest in various constructive undertakings. In India, your plans must also create among the masses a sense of partnership in all big enterprises.

While tackling the problem of social reconstruction, there are naturally certain technical undertakings which have to be handled by the engineers. But, I am certain, there are other minor undertakings which can be done by the people themselves if the planners can get them interested and advise them. I hope they will find means of utilizing the wasted energies of millions of people who can do something useful if told how to do it.

Engineers have a very important part to play in the country where we do not wish things to remain just as they have always been. But they must have a sense of priority. In Japan, for example, they first developed the basic and important industries from which the other less important industries grew later.

I am glad a Planning Commission is to be formed. I have always felt the need for one and hope the Commission will put forward a clear objective before the

1. Address at the Institution of Engineers, New Delhi, 12 February 1950. From *The Hindustan Times* and *The Statesman*, 13 February 1950.
2. Maj.-Gen. H. Williams was the chairman of the Central India Centre of the Institution of Engineers.

country. The Commission must determine what must be done immediately and how various plans for long as well as short-term development can be coordinated.

The proposed Planning Commission will be a much bigger thing than merely a committee to lay down priorities. It will be responsible for the over-all planning of all industrial developments and will also see to it that the present haphazard or parochial planning by the provinces is properly coordinated from the point of view of the whole country and that overlapping of industries between one province and another, or between the Centre and the provinces is put a stop to.

I am not much interested in petty industries developing here and there although they may be good for the time being. When I refer to planning I think of much bigger things as I am interested in the basic and key industries like the production of power. It is only when power is produced on a large scale that other industries can develop and our dependence on foreign countries will go.

In their desire to go forward at a rapid pace, the Central and State Governments had drawn up many plans and schemes. But later they realized all these could not be given effect to for want of funds and other shortcomings and had, therefore, to effect economy measures. The Planning Commission will now look into all these, and draw up schemes anew.

In matters of planning, I am greatly impressed by Japanese precision. Although one of the poorest in natural resources, it is amazing how Japan planned and executed her economic development during the last twenty years.

The engineers should bring to bear their expert knowledge on big plans. I will also like them to assist the large numbers of common people in the villages in improving their methods. I want the engineers to work in a manner that will rouse the enthusiasm of the people for every building programme. Government or engineers will not be able to accomplish the big tasks of building the country until they secure the full-hearted cooperation of the people.

Keeping politics apart I can say that the Government of Soviet Russia is successful in creating this psychological atmosphere. The people of that country took every building project as their own and served for it. National development schemes can be executed only under such a condition of psychological enthusiasm.

I deplore the general outlook of people who look to the Government for everything without themselves doing anything to help themselves. There is another mentality which prevails among many, of working about in offices and ordering about things. Such a mentality is not at all conducive to the country's growth for after all the people themselves will have to create the country's fortune in the future.

The people too have a significant role to perform in the task of reconstruction. No problem can be resolved if people took no interest in it and left it entirely to the Government. The refugee problem, for example, is obviously the responsibility of the Government but it has not been able to solve it in a satisfactory manner because essentially a gigantic problem like that must be solved with the help of the people themselves. The Government will have assisted them in their efforts at rehabilitation.

There can be no doubt about the tremendous sufferings of the refugees. But these sufferings will not go until they themselves are determined to get down to work to change their lot, of course, with Government assistance.

10. The Importance of a Social Outlook¹

Mr Vice-Chancellor², Dr Rao,³ Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dr Rao will remember that I hesitated very much when he invited me to this function. Not that I did not wish to come here and to give such encouragement as I could to the Delhi School of Economics, but the prospect of speaking before economists and about the subject presumably rather frightened me.

We all know as you, Sir, Mr Vice-Chancellor, said that economics has become terribly important in our lives. I suppose it was always important but we realise that fact more under pressure of circumstances. But it is not safe for a Prime Minister to speak about a subject which he ought to know and does not. Therefore, I hesitated because it was possible that such reputation as I have might suffer. My own knowledge, such as it is, of economics, is derived from desultory reading of books, but more so from coming into contact with economic problems right at the base, if I may say so. Now I try to deal with them at the top which is much more difficult. Coming into contact with them, more specially in connection say with the peasantry, with the kisans of my own province and then elsewhere, I just could not understand then and I still do not understand, how any system, economic or social, should function when people like the kisans or people right at the bottom of the scale who are really the base and the foundation and the producers should be so badly off. And it struck me then, without knowing the least bit about economics, that there must be something wrong about any kind of organisation of society which leads to such results.

Well, I thought in those days that it would be easy to put this right, or, at any rate, not too difficult. The last three years have been a course of education of how difficult it is to move at all in any direction, at any rate, with anything resembling speed. And I remember long ago trying to make fun of something that wise people had said. In the arrogance of youth I tried to think and to say that there should be no such thing as the inevitability of gradualness. And yet, more and more I see that nothing is so inevitable as that and it is exceedingly difficult to do anything except very gradually, if at all. So, not knowing much about economics, that is,

1. Speech on the first foundation day anniversary of the Delhi School of Economics. New Delhi, 24 February 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. Maurice Gwyer.
3. Dr V.K.R.V. Rao.

from a scientific or organised point of view, but picking it up in the course of my life with a little reading, with a little experience, and with a great deal of contact with the masses in India, I formed some ideas as to what we should do, in what directions we should go. And then, when I was in a position, when people think I could bring about big changes, I found that perhaps in another position I was capable of effecting changes more than in this exalted position. For then at least I was in touch with powerful forces, I could mould them, I could direct them, I could be affected by them. Now I am in touch with powerful brakes and there is a lot of difference between forces and brakes. I suppose there must be forces or there must be brakes. You cannot have both of them. But when it comes to all brakes and no force, then a certain feeling of extreme—I do not know what to call it, but it is an unhappy feeling—takes possession of the mind. When, as it is obvious, there are difficulties all round, when everyone or many people are for ever pointing out the difficulties of taking the right step or the left, the result is inaction or sometimes rather erratic action.

Anyhow, I have great respect for the economist, as I have great respect for the specialist and the technician and the scientist. And yet, with all that respect, sometimes I have a feeling that learned and wise as he is, he is not always in touch with life's problems as they are, as much as he might or should be. Not that I presume to be very much in touch with them, but having in the past had a varied experience of all manner of people and specially those people who are called humble folks, I cannot quite forget that experience even in the exalted position that I hold. And when I find that these life's problems are thought of and dealt with in a way as if those humble people were somewhere far away in the distance and not living near and all around us, I feel a little uncomfortable. And yet, not being very wise, I do not know how to deal with the situation. Because there is a fundamental difficulty with the specialist, whether he is a scientist or economist or technician or whatever he may be, that he gets to know his subject well, so well that he may not see other subjects round about it. He gets to know a part of his picture. He may know a particular thing he speaks about or studies, and forget the human aspect which should always be before him. Because, after all, the problems of life, whatever they may be, are problems of human beings, and if we forget the human aspect of them, the essence of that problem is not being dealt with; it somehow goes. How to combine this scientist's and technician's and economist's and engineer's knowledge to that wider knowledge of the world and with that human approach to problems—I suppose that is the essence of wisdom. I do not know how that is going to be done but no doubt organisations like the Delhi School of Economics can vastly help, provided they do not become too secluded in their lecture rooms or wherever they do their work, provided they keep in touch with human beings and try always to think in terms of those human beings who abound in this country. If the Delhi School of Economics thinks in these terms, then I have no doubt that the great store of learning it possesses now and to which it will add greatly in the future will be much more fruitful than otherwise.

I am quite certain that it is a very fortunate thing that the University of Delhi and the others who supported this School of Economics did so because whatever criticisms one may offer, as I have attempted to offer, to the pursuit of isolated branches of knowledge, without keeping the whole in view, the fact is that one has to pay attention and a great deal of attention to the science of economics if it is a science. But again, ultimately, whether it is this science or any other, one has to think of certain basic objectives.

Dr Rao referred, I believe, to the social outlook somewhere towards the end of his address. Well, is the social outlook an essential part of the economist, of the science of economics? It ought to be of the human being, of course, but I want to know, is it a part of the science of economics?

I rather doubt it. I am thinking whether it is in a sense technically so, whether it is correct to say so. It is true that it ought to be very much so. Is the social outlook a part of the engineer's business in life? Well, it ought to be, obviously, but it often is not. An engineer may do a very good job of work which you give him. He may be in love with his work, he may be an expert at it; yet he may not be governed with that wider social outlook. Then again, it is an engineer, after all, who works with material, does a job of work, not only planning it but executing it. Those people who work in offices, whether they are economists or administrators, there is a danger that they get rather isolated from that work whether it is in the field or the factory or in the market place or wherever it may be, and because of that isolation they are apt to become lop-sided in their world outlook, world view or in their social outlook.

It is not merely enough, I suppose to feel, to have a certain goodwill for the world, to have a humanitarian outlook or a human outlook; that is all very well; we should have it all there. But something more is necessary and that, I suppose, can be called a social outlook. I would personally say something more even than that is necessary, and it is here that in spite of every attempt to suppress it, my old experience and my old training pushes itself forward and that something, I should say, is a certain revolutionary outlook. Revolutionary in the sense of dynamic. I am not talking in terms of bombs for the moment or of violence. What I am saying is that a certain dynamic outlook, a certain outlook of dissatisfaction with things that are not right and of trying to remedy them, not taking them for granted, not accepting things as they are, in whatever field they are, in the field of religion or philosophy or day-to-day life, or whatever it may be. Now, if you have all those attributes and if the Delhi School of Economics not only develops a very accurate and deep knowledge of the science of economics but sees it as a part of the larger picture of the world, has not only that but also a human outlook and also a social outlook, and also a revolutionary outlook, it will of course achieve wonderful results. I wish it well.

11. Towards New Goals with Faith and Courage¹

Mr President² and Members of the Federation,³

Thank you for inviting me once again to participate in your annual function and for giving me the opportunity once again of meeting you and hearing your views. It is obvious that it is very important for us to understand one another fully in view of the difficult problems that confront us. These problems are very complex. It is possible that we ourselves may have contributed towards making them more complex. But mostly they are the result of other factors over which we have no control, like wars abroad and their consequences and partition of our country. But it is obvious that a great responsibility rests with the Government and it cannot run away from it. It is equally obvious that you too have a tremendous responsibility in this matter because the current economic structure prevailing in the country may present some obstacles to your functioning but, by and large, you have a great role to play. Therefore the responsibility is yours as well as ours, and really speaking, of every individual in the country. You have every right to draw the attention of the people towards the mistakes and weaknesses of the Government. At the same time, the Government too has the right to point out your mistakes to you: the list will perhaps be quite a long one on both sides.

The fact is that we are living in very strange times. There has been a tremendous turmoil in the whole world, but especially in our country in the last few years, and the lives of millions and millions of people have been affected by these events. They have been rudely shaken up, and when their hopes are raised but not fulfilled, and their problems increase, they are no longer willing to put up with it in silence. I often observe that our older generation, even the wisest of them, in which many of you are included, tends to measure the world by the same yardsticks as in the past. But those yardsticks fall far short of reality and can no longer be applicable because the first thing to be borne in mind is that we have undergone revolutionary changes which have made much that was acceptable in the past quite irrelevant. Theories propounded in great tomes have become obsolete. Therefore we have to use our ancient wisdom and acumen in the context of the modern world, not only because it is our duty to do so and to understand modern trends but also because if we fail to do so, we will become completely disoriented. Some of these thoughts come to my mind when I try to formulate policies for our Government or to assess

1. Speech at the annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. New Delhi. 11 March 1950, A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L. (Original in Hindi). Later Nehru spoke in English also.
2. K.D. Jalan.
3. Representatives of over one hundred and twenty commercial and industrial organisations were present.

its successes and failures. Then again, when I hear all sorts of criticisms of the Government, I feel that people have not realized what the world today is all about and where it is going. There is a raging storm everywhere and even if it is not obvious outwardly, there is turbulence in people's hearts which is reflected in their actions and has an impact. I would like to draw your attention to one very important matter. I am not referring to the economic situation but to the state of the people's heart. It is true that I do not know very much about many things, but I do have the capacity to peep into the hearts of the people of India and to understand a little about what moves them or upsets or angers them. There is no doubt that today there is anger, unhappiness, and distress in the hearts of the people of India. They do not know what to do. I do not mean that they want to raise a storm because on the one hand they still have faith and confidence and hope that something will be done for them; on the other hand, there is despair too. Their present situation can be attributed to the general condition of the world today. Very few nations can be considered well off today. Even the biggest and oldest of them are groaning under the after-effects of wars and are trying to face them. In our own country, as I pointed out to you, we have still not recovered from the aftermath of partition. But whatever it is, the fact is that people are no longer willing to put up with things silently. They are not prepared to understand why they should put up with so much if others do not or bear burdens which other people are not ready to. This is the basic thought in everyone's minds and not everyone has the intelligence to look at it objectively—they go by results, after all. On the one hand, they know that we, the Congress, have made tall promises. We adopted a Constitution, as you mentioned, which declares our goals and ideals. People want to know how far we are going in that direction. They do not fully understand the obstacles and difficulties which are in the way.

Therefore, it is very important to understand the kind of world and India that we live in because ultimately a democratic government is influenced greatly by what the common people think and feel. Certainly their votes have an influence. After all we cannot restrict that. Ultimately the test lies in how we handle any problem. What is the problem? Ultimately the problem, as you mentioned, is, broadly speaking, how the people's problems and difficulties are going to be alleviated. Or let me put it this way. Production in the country is very low and so we are able to produce very little wealth. Therefore, we have to do things which produce wealth. Leave alone future progress, even the little that is possible is not being done in our country. How are we to fill the gap? How to reduce unemployment in our country? Unemployment is something that people have lived with for centuries. Now the unemployed are no longer willing to bear that burden because they have now understood the principle that it is the duty of every government to provide employment for everyone. If people work, they will produce wealth for the country. The yardstick for measuring the wealth of a country has changed completely. There are new goals to be achieved these days. If you open one big

factory, the country will benefit and a few people will get employment. But the benefit from a few factories have to be seen against how we are tackling the problem of unemployment in the entire country and how the people's misery is being alleviated or how much wealth is being generated. We do not want to cause harm to any class. But ultimately, people look at any problem from this angle—as to how it affects the common people or to what extent a particular rule or method of production, is advantageous to the people. I am not saying this because our Constitution says so but there is no other way a country can progress. However hard and honestly and faithfully people at the top may work, if the common people are not involved, all our effort will be wasted. However strong a government may be today, it cannot solve the big issues and problems, if it does not have the cooperation of the people. Your factories will come to a standstill if the workers are not willing to cooperate or there is constant tension. No governmental rules and regulations can suppress it. Yes, the wrong-doers must certainly be punished. But we cannot have policies as in the past without the consent of the people—labour or anyone else. That sort of thing will not do in these times because fear is no real basis for implementing programmes and policies. Gradually it gets eroded.

So I am constantly aware of the fact that we have to try and understand the people's minds and hearts. We must use a mental approach. A superficial approach on paper is of no use though a careful examination on paper is also necessary.

You may be aware that there is a great deal of disaffection in people's minds against our Government. As I said, there is constant criticism, though I do not mind that so long it is honest criticism. But as you know, there is criticism against you too who are the representatives of the people. Whether it is right or wrong is a different matter. It is obvious that some of it may be right and some of it wrong. I am talking about the general atmosphere. In my opinion most of these complaints are wrong because people are bent upon criticizing and so they criticize everything. But the fact is that the one big complaint in the country is that you have paid more attention to yourselves, your own gains, by and large, and not to the welfare of the nation or its people. As I said, most of these complaints are wrong. But I feel that some of them are right too. I have no doubt about this. The fact is that in the last two to three years, there have been many occasions when the people have been greatly enraged. You mentioned controls. I do not wish to have unnecessary controls. But do you remember what happened once we removed the control on cloth? People were in a panic and a handful of individuals took undue advantage of the situation and there was no way of curbing them. I feel that if you do not have the strength and the power to control those who do wrong, then how can you have the power to do anything else? If you cannot control your own people and pass on the burden to the Government, then how will you shoulder greater responsibilities? If those of you who are weak do wrong, and you are unable to control them, the country will come to great harm. I do not wish that controls should be increased but they did have an impact on the country. Recently the matter of

sugar came up, but I will not go into all that. The Tariff Board has brought out a long report.⁴ Everybody including the Central Government, the State Government, Ministries of Industry and Works, etc. are to blame to some extent but whatever it is, the effect on the nation was bad. There have been many complaints, though it is not a secret that sugar factory owners and others are responsible to a large extent for this mess. But I would like to draw attention to the fact that apart from the broad principles which we work upon, it is a harmful thing when feelings run high in the country and create disaffection, obstacles, and tension. No government can change the thinking of a nation by force—it can keep the administration under some control at the top. So then, how should we deal with this in an age when it is the people who will, if not today, tomorrow or the day after, vote the government into power? If we do not pay attention to them but merely go our own way, even if we think it is the best way, it will not be enough. We have to follow a path which is best for us and at the same time, the people must also look at it in that light. Only when both these things are present, the going will be smooth. If we do something that we consider right but the people do not understand it, then there are obstacles and tension. On the other hand, if we do something that is not right, then even if the people understand, nothing can move because the method itself is wrong.

As you see, there are broad ideological conflicts and arguments, tensions and different schools of thoughts in the world today which often lead to wars. Our principle has been to follow a path of peace and nonviolence and as far as possible, a path of understanding. Mahatma Gandhi emphasized this constantly which had some impact on us, even if it was not total. It is true that we wish to follow that path but at the same time it would be wrong to hide the fact that the system of separate parties and groups have their own advantages and disadvantages. They pull in different directions and create tensions. In Europe and the United States, there is open rivalry and confrontation among the various parties, but here we seek to keep them in the background, and as far as possible come to an understanding in order to avoid confrontation. But the fact remains that there are separate groups and parties. We may try to minimize the fact but it would be wrong to ignore it altogether. The atmosphere that prevails elsewhere is bound to spread to our country. Ultimately, we can deal with the situation and stop the rift from spreading only by solving the problems that confront us. If we cannot solve them, it is obvious that people will look elsewhere for a solution.

Therefore I want you to look at these problems from this point of view. You have said a great deal in your speeches. I will not go into each point separately. It is for you to consider and examine and consult our colleagues. It is obvious

4. The Tariff Board recommended discontinuation of protection to sugar, and some other commodities. In certain cases protection was extended from one to three years.

that the problem is such that all of us must work together with our entire might and make the best possible effort. It is obvious that we need your cooperation and wish to give you our help. But at the same time if you insist that whatever you demand must be accepted, then it is obvious that it is not possible because the complexities of these problems are beyond your understanding. The world of today is confronted with so many complex questions that, if you will forgive me, you cannot understand all of them. Today's world is beyond your comprehension. What you say may be right to some extent but none of the problems of today can be solved by a debating society, because one question involves fifty others. It is possible that one solution may be right for a particular problem but it can affect ten other issues adversely. So these things have to be considered in their entirety which you cannot often comprehend. Yes, it is possible that many among you may be able to understand these things clearly. I am not talking of individuals. What I am saying is that the views and opinions from the side of trade and industry are no doubt weighty and ought to be carefully examined. But at the same time we have to see how they will affect our labour and ultimately, how they affect our objectives. We cannot consider these things in isolation. What I mean is, if you will excuse my saying so, your thinking on these issues is somewhat outdated—it belongs to the nineteenth century. The world has changed and very few countries can stick to the old ways. We have to seek new solutions, there is no other way. The fact is that in the last two to three years, the Government has not been bound by any fixed policies. I am not saying this to praise the Government. It has constantly received blows and has had to control various difficult situations. It has to evolve an economic policy but before that, it has to safeguard the unity of the country, to see that it does not disintegrate into several pieces and that the political situation does not worsen because if it does, then our economic policy will recede into the background. We will simply not have an opportunity to put our economic policy into action. So we did all this. Whether it was right or wrong is a different matter. But we must at least accept that what we have adopted as our goal in the Preamble to the Constitution⁵ is the right one and something we cannot afford to forget. If you examine it carefully, you will find that if we do not go in that direction we will go wrong, but apart from that, we will lose our moorings. If we cannot lead the millions of Indians in the right direction and fill them with an understanding of the need to go in that direction, then we cannot bring about rapid development in the country, however wise our policies may be.

So I want to draw your attention towards all this because I realize that I am here before you neither to defend myself nor apologize for anything nor to boast

5. The Preamble declared that India was to be a sovereign, democratic Republic which should secure for all its citizens: justice—social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity. And among them all it was to promote fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation.

about what we have done. We have made thousands of mistakes. But I would like to humbly state that we have made the best possible effort. History will judge whether the result of our efforts have been good or bad. We will continue our efforts and at least we will never run away from any problem. We will try to face them with strength and courage. I will request that you too should give your full cooperation in these tasks and help us and be helped by us. But you must always remember that the ultimate test is how far we are able to solve the big problems of the nation. You mentioned some of those problems. But the problem is, though we have made long lists of things to be done, it is important to decide which of them should be tackled first. Our difficulty is not of work but what our resources will permit us to do. We may have ten tasks before us but our resources may permit us to undertake only five. That is one thing. But another important thing is to gauge what the impact of all this is on the people. It becomes important to judge their reaction. It is very important to remember that if we fail to take that into consideration, then our efforts will be wasted. We must not only explain to the people what we are doing but also try to involve them in everything that we do.

As I said, we need the cooperation of everyone in the great tasks before us. Take the question of planning. You mentioned the National Planning Commission and I am happy that it has been constituted. The regret is that it could not be done earlier but we were prevented by circumstances. Anyhow, there are very capable people in the Commission who will look at the picture in its entirety and not merely at a segment of it because the moment you start planning, you have to look at the complete picture. Otherwise even a small segment which is missing can make all your calculations go wrong. So they will examine the whole thing and I hope that they will start their work very soon and help the Government. But apart from the plans that they may draw up, I feel that they should at all times keep in mind ways and means of harnessing the manpower available in the tasks of the nation. It is not enough to do things with their consent. All of them must do something, whether they are from the villages or from the cities. The main thing is that when millions of people engage in even the smallest task, it becomes a big thing. One individual may not be able to achieve much, but when hundreds of thousands of people do something, the impact is tremendous. Secondly, we have to create an atmosphere conducive to hard work in the country. Nothing can be achieved by criticisms and talking ill of one another or of the Government. Our press for instance, is critical of everyone. They hold a pen in their hands and put it to paper without any sense of responsibility. Therefore, we have to create an atmosphere which would help people to understand that all of them are cogs in the machinery of India, and that they should contribute something to the progress of the country. We have to create a mental climate in which people look at the right side of things and pay more attention to their work and less to unnecessary criticism.⁶

6. The Hindi speech ends here.

It has become a normal habit or it is becoming a normal habit for me to be bilingual on such occasions. Well, I am very grateful to you for inviting me here today again, because it does one good for us to meet each other, to talk to each other, and even to talk at each other occasionally, and to point out, and to express our gratitude to each other, even in fulsome language, and then to add to it some points of criticisms of each other. Because all are necessary in the scheme of things. You have mentioned a large number of matters in your address, and I do not propose to deal with them; partly because that would involve a rather careful sifting of various points and dealing with them, partly because frankly I am not competent to deal with some of them. One of my virtues is, as you no doubt know, that I recognize my limitations, and because I recognize my limitations, I sometimes presume to recognise my virtues also.

Now, coming to the other aspect, about which perhaps, I know something more than you do. I was referring to that in my Hindustani address just now and that is, while it is important that we should consider all these points from the expert level, from the trade and industrial level, from all kinds of levels, from the labour level and so on and so forth. One of the most important things is to see this in the background of the major events and the major forces that are working in the world and in India today. There is a tendency for people engaged in a particular occupation or industry to look at, to examine a problem from that rather limited point of view. Now, that point of view may or may not be correct. But if it is isolated from that larger picture, then you cannot possibly get a correct answer for that. Because the other factors affect the solution of that problem tremendously. Now obviously today we are living at a time when vast forces are at play. When people, who accepted a certain order of things in the past, do not accept it any longer, when they want results, when indeed they want something which we ourselves have promised them for long. And they will not, they have a good deal of affection for us, a good deal of even patience with us but nevertheless, there is no sense of submission in them to what they might previously have considered, the workings of fate. They have begun to think, it is not so much fate, as forces which can be controlled by human beings, and are controlled and so they demand a change. And if they do not get it, they become unhappy and troublesome. Now, obviously we have had to face the economic problem here for a long time past, difficult problems when we have to deal with vast numbers of human beings to raise their level, but normally one has time to do it, in a sense to build something up. Today you have to face a situation and problems encompass you all the time and hardly allow you time to think, and you are required to solve them from day to day and hour to hour. And unless you produce results, well, the atmosphere becomes, more and more difficult for you to function in. So I tried to lay stress on this fact before you, just now, in what I was speaking in Hindustani.

Now I do have some sense of, shall I say, the masses. Most of my life, barring these rather extraordinary three years that I have spent here, and in spite of three



SIGNING THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA, NEW DELHI, 24 JANUARY 1950



WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI, JANUARY 1950



WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD, 27 JANUARY 1950



MEMBERS OF THE UNION CABINET, NEW DELHI, 31 JANUARY 1950

years, I still sometimes have a feeling of being a stranger round about these places. Most of my life has been spent in close contact with the Indian masses, and even now, after some kind of estrangement for two or three years, I find it a little easy to find communion with them, when I am nearer to them. So always when I judge of a problem, I have to think of the mass reactions to it. I have to think, how far what I have been telling them in the past, how far I am acting up to that, how far our Government is acting up to that, or how far forces beyond our control are preventing us from doing it? Obviously a large number of forces, utterly beyond our control, and utterly beyond even our previous conception have come into play. Nobody thought, at least I do not think that at any time that what happened after this partition was conceivable. Yet all these things that happened and we have been driven from pillar to post, from one problem to another. And because we have been facing problems affecting not only the whole safety and security of the country, and our independence, naturally we have been somewhat hesitant, to launch out on any schemes which we might otherwise have done, because we wanted to do something first, and then launch at something else. Maybe, we were wrong in our judgment of priorities, but anyhow we had to deal with the immediate problems before we dealt with something which for the moment might be postponed. And so we pursued a policy which perhaps is rightly criticised, has not been very logical, has been rather shifting about from one foot to the other, and all that. It is perfectly true. And yet I think in the nature of things it was logical, because in the narrower sense if you like, because it was always an attempt to fit in with the logic of changing situations, may be, badly, may be unsuccessfully. Because life at any time, was not too logical, and it ceases to be logical at all when the kind of changes that we have seen, take place. We see today various things happening in parts of our country, in parts of Pakistan, which are difficult to understand, much less justified. Human beings behave in an extraordinary way which cannot be justified even by the logic of some group of human beings, wanting good for some future benefit. Because it is obvious that it does benefit nobody. It does only harm, injury and destruction. I am just coming from Calcutta, you know, only a day ago, and I have seldom spent four more exhausting days than I spent in Calcutta, not physically exhausting, I am used to physical effort, but mentally and emotionally exhausting, having to face with intangible things, with human passions, human fears. It is difficult to get hold of them, and to get rid of them. So there was not much logic about it. In fact, there is utter absence of logic about what is happening in Pakistan and what is happening in reaction here. The whole thing is fantastic from any reasonable or logical point of view. Yet that is the logic of life which we have to face.

So, in our course during the last few years, we have followed this changing, shifting course, if you like, and often with, not at all being pleased with ourselves, at any rate, I was not pleased with myself and yet there was a certain compulsion of events about it. It is, as you have seen in our recent budget, our very able

Finance Minister has said a great deal about it. It is not for me to say anything more. It is so easy to criticise that budget from a hundred points of view. Yet what I would like you to understand is the basic approach of it. I mean to say many of the things that the critics point out are acceptable to us. It is not that we reject that point of view, but in the peculiar circumstances of a particular moment, and the peculiar pressures, can we take a particular step which might weaken us or disable us for the moment? Something may be good in the long run we should take it. Something may be good in the long run, but in the short run it may produce certain results which are harmful in the short run, therefore, the long run itself becomes doubtful. So one has to consider all these things when one has to face these difficult situations.

I was therefore venturing to point out to you, gentlemen, that if we are to progress in this country, obviously, we progress by some measure of peaceful cooperation on the whole, or by violent upheaval. Now, there have been enough violent upheavals in this country, of other types and kinds, communal and the rest. And these did not come by our choice. These came and violent upheavals seldom seek permission. Nevertheless, these have been a bad experience. There may be certain things which are worse than this but nevertheless these are bad things. And these are bad things for a variety of reasons. First of all, though an upheaval may perhaps succeed in sweeping away something that is evil, yet there is a big hiatus left, before one can even try to build, and, at any rate, the price paid for it is terribly heavy. The price paid, not by a certain section, I am talking, but by the whole country or the masses even, it is a very heavy price, and a generation goes by paying that price, or more than a generation. Apart from that it leaves a trail of hatred and violence, which breeds more violence to upset any constructive effort, of suspicion and fear, and once that happens to a country it takes a long time to settle down. As a matter of fact, as a result of these two last big Wars, where people gave their lives, large numbers of them, with noblest motives, for the highest causes, they gave their lives, to protect their country, to serve a cause, yet somehow, wars breed brutality and violence and intolerance and all that. And so violent upheavals leave a trace behind and not just a trace, there are plenty of it, which carry on and poison relations, social relations. And so one tries to avoid them, one tries to avoid wars, till they are forced upon one and then one has to fight with all one's strength and as also in the social spheres, quite apart from the theory, you may aim at, or the picture which you wish to realise, I feel that if we do it by large-scale violence then we shall miss achieving our aims. I am quite certain we shall get somewhere else, and that somewhere else will not be good, because it has been conditioned so much by this large-scale violence, and so, one wants to avoid that but one cannot avoid that unless one offers some other valid solution of the problem that grips one. Merely to think that other people are wrong and other people must be forced to think right is not a solution. One has to carry large numbers of people with oneself.

Even from the democratic point of view if a government does not carry them, some other government comes in, which tries to carry out wishes of the electorate. But apart from that, when you have to face these major problems which we have to face today, we just cannot solve them by governmental effort alone. Governmental effort and governmental direction are right, are essential, but governmental effort must be allied to the large-scale public effort, must be allied to large scale effort on your part, must be allied to large-scale mass effort. For a government to say, as we say often enough that we work for the good of the masses, well, it is a good thing. But it is not good enough. This kind of paternal approach, we are working for your good, or for you to say, we are working for the good of our labour force. It is not good enough. The modern world begins to think somewhat differently. A government ought to function, not that my government functions in that way, I do not say that, but a government ought to function not for the good of the masses merely but it should produce a sensation of working with them and they should have the sensation of working with it, to some extent. If that is done, of course, the good of the masses presumably follows. But it is that sensation of working together that is to be produced that they must have the sensation that they are partners in a large enterprise, in a large undertaking, may be, in the smallest possible degree. Unless you produce that, I would submit—this would apply to the future working of industry also—whatever economic or other pattern it may take, unless you can produce that sensation, you will not get very far.

There is this Planning Commission that has been formed, and I am very happy that very eminent men are in it. Eminent not only in their particular spheres, but enthusiasts at that, who want to do something and not merely produce a report to define. There is not going to be a Commission just producing a report but it is going to be a living Commission, functioning from day to day, and I hope producing results, not magic results but solid results. Now one of the things that this Commission ought to do, according to my thinking, apart from its other planning, which it will present to government is to consider how to produce, how to bring in, the cooperation of large numbers of people in our great national undertakings. The villager, how should he help the larger scheme in his particular village?

National planning, you gentlemen, perhaps think, is just the planning of certain types of industry. Well yes, certainly it is a very important, basic part of it, but it is also something much more. It is, how to get the villager function in his village or the person in the town or wherever he may be. And for him to realise that something is not only being done for him but he is doing it. He is part of the machinery doing it. If you do that, you will see how rapid and tremendous the progress is? So I was laying stress on this psychological approach, apart from the various practical approaches, with which you are rightly concerned, as we are concerned. Take again this question of unemployment. Now today it becomes more and more difficult for people to say that we are not or for a government to say

that we are not responsible for unemployment. They are responsible. They may not have the capacity to solve it and do something immediately. But they must assume responsibility for providing work as far as possible, for the unemployed, a gainful occupation. In fact you have to bring in the human factor in your calculations and in your schemes. You cannot ignore it. You cannot treat the economic, any economic machinery, as a lifeless machine which turns out goods at one end, and produces profits or losses at the other, and also creates unemployment. You must always remember that economics, well I speak with all diffidence because I know very little about it, deals with human beings of flesh and blood and those human beings have not only flesh and blood, but they have got rather excitable minds and passions today. So it is in that context that you view these things whether it is industry or labour or the peasant or any other group of people. The Government has to deal with that human material and make it not only, well benefited, but make it realise, make it appreciate that, and what is even more, make it participate in the performance of that work. Because, the funny thing is, the odd thing is that after all you can also benefit, if they benefit themselves. You cannot benefit them as some people often mention by giving doles. On the one hand, we want greater production, and on the other, there are unemployed people doing nothing. On the face of it, this is illogical. A person, who is unemployed, should produce some wealth as he is a consumer anyhow. Now, of course, you may say, we have not got enough machines, we have not got enough then well, make the machines all right. But then here one little fact on which Mahatma Gandhi stressed comes in. A person who is unemployed may not have big machine to work, if he gets a machine or a small machine whatever it is, but in a proper scheme of things, he can always do something. Some productive effort he can make by himself or as a member of a group in his village or wherever he may be. The economist will tell you that this man's work is very little. But that work multiplied by that of millions happens to become very big. So that, and I just do not see, however rapid our industrialisation may be, how that industrialization is going to absorb hundreds of millions of people in the country, if you like, thirty millions of them, unless you make them do something in the nature of cottage industry, small scale industry and cooperative industries. So I shall submit that we should march along all these lines keeping in view all the time the basic factor and the basic yardstick by which you will judge all your efforts as to how far it is in accord with what we have laid down in the Preamble of our Constitution. Thank you.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
II. Inauguration of the Indian Republic

1. To B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya¹

New Delhi
November 29, 1949

My dear Pattabhi,

A certain difficulty has arisen and I am therefore writing to you, in your capacity as Congress President, about it. What are we to call the President of our Republic in Hindi? There appears to be no suitable word for it except *Rashtrapati*. Now, as you know, the Congress President has been the *Rashtrapati* for at least 20 years and normally one would not like to make any change. On the other hand what are we to call the President of the Republic? As far as I can see, there is no other alternative left except to call him *Rashtrapati*....

I should like to have your opinion on this matter and I would suggest your communicating with all the members of the Working Committee about it also...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

2. To Lord Mountbatten¹

New Delhi
16 January 1950

Dear Lord Mountbatten,

Last night I returned from Colombo and received your letter of the 11th January.² Also your message on the occasion of India becoming a Republic.³ This latter message will be published in our newspapers on the 26th January. Thank you very

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Mountbatten had written that a number of Indian newspapers had asked him to contribute articles or send messages for publication on 26 January. He had to refuse because the King's Regulation and Admiralty Instructions did not permit serving Naval officers to write for the press and he did not wish to seek Admiralty approval to make an exception.

3. Mountbatten had sent "to all the peoples of India our affectionate good wishes for her future prosperity and greatness." He also recalled his association with the transfer of power from "British to Indian hands".

much for both your letter and the message. I am sure our people will greatly appreciate your good wishes on this occasion.⁴

This January 26th is certainly a day of great significance for us and brings fulfilment to a dream of long ago and yet few of us, I suppose, are satisfied or feel happy about conditions in the country. Problem after problem has piled up and there is no sense of exhilaration about the people. Perhaps that is a common malady all over the world.

I shall not forget the Indian Destroyer *Flotilla* and I shall try to visit it as soon as I can. I am afraid, however, that your suggestion that I should go for a cruise on the Flag Ship *Delhi* or on the Destroyer *Flotilla*, delightful as it is, is beyond my capacity. I just cannot leave my work here.

I need hardly tell you how sorry we are that Rajaji is leaving us.⁵ I shall miss him more than I can say. I hope, however, that his great qualities will be utilised in the service of the nation even after he ceases to be the Governor General.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. Mountbatten had written that he could not let this great occasion pass in silence and enclosed a semiformal letter to Nehru "which you may care to give the press for publication on the 26th January... I cannot see how the Admiralty could possibly object to your publishing a letter which I had written to you. Indeed failure to have any word of encouragement and good wishes from their former Governor-General might be misconstrued by the people of India."
5. Mountbatten had written that "Edwina told me that Rajen Babu is replacing Rajaji. Although I am fond of them both, I cannot help feeling that Rajaji will be an irreplaceable loss not only to India but personally to you."

3. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi
January 23, 1950

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I have just received your letter a little after midnight and I am answering it immediately.²

1. File No. 2(154)/48-PMS.
2. Rajendra Prasad had written about Cariappa's suggestion that something distinctive on the dress of the President would be very much appreciated. A black or grey *achkan* with *churidar*, an orange or blue sash and the *chakra* either embroidered on cloth or made of metal to be hung on the left side of the chest was suggested.

The question of having some kind of a distinctive dress arose when Mountbatten was leaving. He was very anxious that Rajaji should have such a dress. Rajaji made some proposals too. These more or less related to some kind of a big gown, like a university gown, which should be worn over any other dress, which might have some kind of embroidery. Somehow or other nothing came of this and the matter has remained pending since then.

I think that some time or other we shall have to evolve some formal dress especially for the President and also for others. I do not think it would be proper for us to adopt any distinctive badges, overnight as it were, without careful consideration. It would be odd, if you suddenly appeared with coloured sashes. The sash probably would look rather attractive and we may well adopt it later on. For the present, I would not recommend that this should be done. Nor would I have the *chakra*.

We have not laid down any special dress for Ministers or the like. But we have laid down a formal dress for our Ambassadors and we have tried gradually to make our officers and others here wear it too on formal occasions. This dress is a black *achkan* and *churidar* pyjamas. Personally I wear it usually at night and sometimes on other formal occasions also. The practice is growing.

If I may suggest it to you, this rather simple formal dress, that is a black *achkan* and white *churidar* pyjamas, would be suitable for the inauguration ceremony as well as for any other official functions. It would also be suitable for night wear.

Some time later we might go into this question of a special dress for the President.

I am returning to you the orange sash as well as the *chakra* etc.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. The Dancing Star of Freedom¹

After another day has passed, India will put on a new garb, and a new phase in her long history will begin. Something will happen for which generations in India

1. Speech at the banquet Nehru gave to the retiring Governor-General, C. Rajagopalachari, New Delhi, 24 January 1950, *National Herald*, 27 January 1950.

have laboured and suffered. In a sense, a big change happened two and a half years ago and this is merely a continuation of it and a final consummation.

This change has taken place rather unobtrusively, noiselessly almost, and so some people imagine that perhaps the change has not taken place, or not sufficiently, because they think that any major change in a nation must be preceded by disorder and chaos and conflict. And because the change in India has been more or less peaceful, cooperative and by agreement, in some minds it has not produced a sufficient understanding or awareness of what has happened.

It is true that history presents many examples of chaos giving birth to the dancing star of freedom. But even so, wherever there has been chaos and a great deal of conflict, other results have also followed and it has taken a long time to get over that.

In India we have been fortunate in this respect that this great change has taken place by agreement and on the whole painlessly. In the last two years and a half the change has been a continuous one and in the last twenty months or so that you, Sir, have been the Head of our State here, many people have helped in this change being continuous and yet without any jumps, but perhaps most of all you have helped in that change.

You came to the scene as the last Governor-General and the order which you have represented for the last twenty months or so will cease in India after another day and a half. I am not quite sure of my dates, but I imagine that the Governors-General in India started about one hundred and seventy seven years ago with Warren Hastings. It is rather odd to think of Warren Hastings and you in the same line of succession. And yet that very oddness brings out the great change that has taken place.

You came on the scene with an entirely different background—these customs and this display of imperial pomp and splendour were entirely new to you and strangely enough, you made people feel that a palace could be a cottage and a cottage a palace and that it did not make the slightest difference to you—to your way of life or to your way of thinking—whether you lived in the Viceregal Palace or whether you lived in a little village in the Salem district in the Madras Province.

Now I imagine there are very few among us from whatever country we may hail, who are likely to succeed in doing that in the measure that you did. For my part—if I may frankly confess it—it was a matter of continuous surprise to me how this took place. And yet it should not have surprised me because you and I and many of us were not strangers to each other.

I do not remember for the moment when exactly I met you, Sir, except that it seems very long ago; and for these thirty years or more we worked in various fields and took part in many battles, if I may say so, peaceful though they were. And so you brought to this scene at a critical and transitional phase of India's history, a certain endowment which was perhaps in some ways peculiar to India and India's own culture.

You said yesterday at another place that you had not travelled much, that you had not left India's shores. But because you have not left them, you travelled in

other ways and conducted many distant voyages of discovery of the mind. You delved deep into India's past literature and no doubt imbibed some of the great qualities you possess from that great literature—the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* about which you wrote also. But it was not only India's literature from which you sought to find something but other great literatures of the world. And so while you may have spent the major portion of your life in some corner of Madras Province and a bit of it in other parts of India, you made your mind open to the world and thus became a real citizen of the world, for after all, these matters depend more on one's mental outlook than on the physical fabric which most of us indulge in today.

And so you brought to your high office something of the spirit of India's own culture, a gentleness of spirit, a tolerance, a wide humanity, at a time when they were most needed in India's troubled scene.

I have come in contact with you, Sir, on many occasions during the last thirty years and, if I may say so with all respect, we have grown to like each other very much. But more especially during the last twenty months fate brought us together in different capacities and I had to rely on you greatly even though you might have been a constitutional Governor-General.

I do not know if I came to you because you were Governor-General or because you were a known comrade and a person of mature wisdom. And because I was often troubled in mind and spirit I came to you and sought your advice and I always found it very helpful.

And so when the time comes for you to go away from here, there is a feeling of a slight emptiness in me, of a loss and a certain regret and a certain apprehension that I would not have your advice when I might most need it. And yet it is right that the change that is coming over India in a day and a half for which we have worked for so long should come. It had to, and without it our ambition could not have been completed.

Many of us often take the name of Mahatma Gandhi. Sometimes some of us rather exploit that name and we lay stress on some minor aspects of his innumerable activities, forgetting often the basic and fundamental things for which he stood. In you, Sir, I found stress always laid on those basic and fundamental things.

We all know how, with all your deep love for the Indian people, you never allowed yourself to be swept away by popular passion. You were master of your mind and your spirit, and resisted, if I may say so, even in the past, many an argument that Mahatma Gandhi had put forward. It is immaterial whether you were right or wrong in any particular matter, but it showed the real quality of your mind and your spirit. And so when you occupied this high office you brought a distinction to it and a distinction which became all the more noticeable because it was combined with the uttermost simplicity and frankness, and so you managed to show that greatness of spirit—we all know it and yet we do not always acknowledge it—which has nothing to do, and even dignity has nothing to do with the external emblems that people display. It is something deeper and of the inner mind.

It is interesting to think how India has honoured its people. India, as all the world knows, honoured most of all a man who was not much to look at, feeble of body, without power, that is without what is normally called power, power of money, power of physical strength, power of armies and navies, power of any other possession; yet India honoured him above all else. He could not compel by any force except his appeal, except the example of his life.

So India has always honoured—and I hope always will continue to honour—the man of spirit rather than the man who merely has some external symbols attached to him.

And you in this high office, Sir, displayed also that peculiar trait that India has had of how persons are great without the external emblems that the world counts for greatness. You will relinquish this office soon and go away to the south of India and of course we shall remember you in many ways.

You have been a warrior in India's cause and we shall remember you as an old fighter and as a man of peace, a philosopher, and a seeker after truth. But above all we shall always remember you as a dear comrade. You will go away, and you will go with all our affection and good wishes. But of course you will not go away very far, and of course you cannot leave us, and how can we leave you?

There are not many of us left in this country who might be called the old guard of our national movement. Their numbers decrease no doubt, as they must.

So long as some of us remain, inevitably we look to each other and we have a right to expect help from each other and so, though we may say farewell to you in two or three days' time—it is obviously not a farewell for there can be no parting till there comes the last parting of all—I am quite sure that when necessity demands it, and necessity demands it all the time, if I may say so—not only our affection but the need of the country will call you to other services for the country you have lived in and served for so long. So with this feeling and conviction that you are there and that you will come back whenever you are needed, I am assured a little and I do not feel what otherwise I might have felt at your going away.

5. The First President of India¹

Mr President,

May I, Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of every member of this Honourable House offer you respectful congratulations on this high honour that has been placed

1. Speech in the Constituent Assembly on the election of Rajendra Prasad as the President of India, 24 January 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

upon you. It is more than three years since we began the work in this Constituent Assembly under your leadership. And during these three years much has happened in this country which has changed the face of this country. We have faced turmoil and crisis repeatedly, but we have gone on with this work of making a Constitution of the Republic of India.² Well, now we have accomplished that task. That chapter is closed but fresh labours await us. Another chapter begins in a day or two. Not only have we had experience of your able leadership during these three years of great difficulty but many of us have known you for thirty or forty years or so, as a soldier of India ever on the forefront of the battle of freedom. So we welcome you, Sir, as our leader, as the Head of our Republic of India, and as a comrade who has faced, without flinching, all these crises and troubles that have confronted this country during the past generation.

One task is accomplished today in this Assembly and this Assembly will cease to be, having done its work, or rather it will suffer a sea-change and emerge as the Parliament of the Republic of India. One task is accomplished that we set for ourselves long ago. Other tasks now confront us. One dream that we dreamt for years past has been realised. But we confront again other dreams and other tasks, perhaps more arduous than the ones we have already faced. It comforts us all to know that in the tasks and struggles in the future we shall have you as the Head of this Republic of India.

2. The Constitution of India was adopted on 26 November 1949 after being passed in the third reading by the Constituent Assembly and authenticated by Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly. It comprised 395 Articles and eight Schedules and took two years, eleven months and eighteen days to complete. It came into force from 26 January 1950.

6. A Historic Day¹

Events crowd in upon us and because of their quick succession we are apt to miss their significance. Some of us give messages on every occasion exhorting people to great endeavour and even these messages become stale through repetition.

Yet undoubtedly 26 January 1950 is a day of high significance for India and the Indian people. It does mean the consummation of one important phase of our national struggle. That journey is over, to give place to another and perhaps more arduous journey. A pledge is fulfilled and the fulfilment of every pledge gives satisfaction and strength for future endeavour.

There is a peculiar appropriateness about this January 26, for this day links up the past with the present and this present is seen to grow out of that past. Twenty

1. Message to the nation, New Delhi, 25 January 1950. *National Herald*, 26 January 1950.

years ago we took the first pledge of independence. During these twenty years we have known struggle and conflict and failure and achievement. The man who led us through apparent failure to achievement is no more with us, but the fruit of his labours is ours. What we do with this fruit depends upon many factors, the basic factors being those on which Gandhiji laid stress throughout his life—high character, integrity of mind and purpose, a spirit of tolerance and cooperation and hard work. I can only suggest to our people that we should found our republican freedom on these basic characteristics and shed fear and hatred from our minds and think always of the betterment of the millions of our people.

We are fortunate to witness the emergence of the Republic of India and our successors may well envy us this day. But fortune is a hostage which has to be jealously guarded by our own good work and which has a tendency to slip away if we slacken in our efforts or if we look in wrong directions. *Jai Hind*.

7. To Sri Krishna Sinha¹

New Delhi

January 25, 1950

My dear Sri Babu,

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Republic, there has been a large release of prisoners from jail.² I had suggested that wherever possible, political prisoners should also be released in this connection, unless there was some special reason for not doing so. I had mentioned in particular the police prisoners in Bihar. I have heard rather vaguely that these prisoners are not being included in the amnesty. It is of course for you and your Government to judge and I am not in a position to do so adequately. But on general considerations I should have thought it eminently desirable for these persons to be released. On an occasion like this, a little generosity pays.

I remember that Gandhiji was specially interested in these people and that it was at his suggestion that they delivered themselves for arrest. I am also told that in the 1942 movement they played a fairly important part. If this is so, they are men whom it is worthwhile winning over.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. On 26 January 1950, the Government declared an amnesty for prisoners. Prisoners sentenced to three months or less were released as well as those with sentences of ten years or under who had served half their term, inclusive of remission previously earned. Similarly prisoners sentenced to more than ten years or transportation for life were released if they had served five years. Those who were not eligible for normal remission were granted special remissions.

I am writing to you to bring this matter specially to your notice so that you might give it consideration. As I have said above however, it is for you to decide.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. Reply to D.F. Malan's Message¹

I have been deeply moved by your warm message² of good wishes to India and her people on this historic day and by your generous personal reference to me. Our people are determined to live up to the teachings of the Father of the Nation, Mr Gandhi, who exhorted us to aim high for the peace and good of mankind and to endeavour to achieve that purpose by pacific and moral methods. I sincerely hope that through negotiation and discussion, India and South Africa will solve their common problems with honour and satisfaction to both.

1. New Delhi, 27 January 1950. Messages of greetings were received from several Heads of States on India becoming a Republic to which Nehru replied. P.I.B. files.
2. D.F. Malan stated: "This happy outcome to many years of struggle is above all due to the wise statesmanship of Mr Gandhi and yourself and to the firm determination to seek a settlement of India's problems on a basis of negotiation and discussion rather than by other means. May the new Republic of India long continue to be inspired by this example of her greatest sons."

9. To Lord Mountbatten¹

New Delhi
January 29, 1950

My dear Dickie,

... We have had a very strenuous week here with the various functions connected with the inauguration of the Republic. President Soekarno and his wife also came here for a few days² and just before them, a number of Commonwealth Ministers turned up. The result is that I feel very tired and in need of rest. But there is little chance of rest.

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. They were in India from 23 January to 29 January 1950 and attended the Republic Day functions.

The various functions we have had here were very well organised and were acclaimed as being great successes. The parade on the afternoon of the 26th January was perfect in its own way and impressed everybody present. We had this at this time in the Stadium and everything went off with clockwork precision. Very large crowds gathered in Delhi and there was much enthusiasm, but the very perfection of our arrangements rather kept them at a distance from the principal functions. It was impossible to accommodate them in the Stadium. The Presidential procession did go through some of the crowded streets, but it consisted of the President's carriage only and the Body Guard. There was thus some disappointment. We propose to have a procession going into the old city for the Town Hall for the Municipal function next week. This would give a chance to the crowds to participate a little more intimately.

I remember vividly what took place on August 15, 1947. The arrangements were not so good then and we were all overwhelmed by the crowds. Perhaps in the final analysis that was better than this perfection of arrangements which we had on this occasion.

Soekarno and his wife spent four days here and charmed everybody. They are a delightful couple...

Yours,
Jawaharlal

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
III. The Andhra Province

1. Formation of an Andhra Province¹

Question: Yes, Sir, we expect you to say something on what is uppermost now in many people's minds here.

Jawaharlal Nehru: And what is that?

Q: The Andhra Province question!²

JN: What is there that I can tell you. We want to push it through as rapidly as possible. That is all.

Q: But that is not saying much.

JN: There is not much more to say anyhow. Obviously a decision having been taken, it has got to be given effect to as soon as possible. The delay is not caused by lack of decision—a decision has been taken—but by certain enquiries and examinations which have got to be made.

Q: How soon may it be?

JN: It is bad for all parties to leave things in a fluid state, is it not. But you cannot, at the same time, jump over things. Can you?

Q: What are the odds about getting the thing through before January 26?

1. Interview with the press at Meenambakkam airport, Madras, on way to Colombo to attend the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference, 8 January 1950. From *The Hindustan Times*, 9 January 1950.
2. The movement for an Andhra Province had started in 1913 and had received fresh impetus after the attainment of independence by India. On 16 November 1949 the Congress Working Committee decided to recommend to the Government of India the creation of a separate Andhra Province, excluding Madras city, in accordance with the recommendations of the J.V.P. Committee. Andhra became India's first linguistic province based on the Telugu-speaking people in 10 districts and three *talukas* of the Bellary district—all belonging to Madras Province—having approximately an area of 67,000 square miles and a population of about 20,000,000.

JN: It seems to me hardly a feasible proposition. A number of things have got to be clarified and it is not a question of principles only.³ After all, it is a big matter and it would not be a very wise thing to do something which may lead to any confusion.

Q: Many people are anxious that it should be pushed through before January 26.

JN: It may be so. But you must remember that others are interested in it only in a general way because of certain general considerations. It is the people here, no doubt, who are concerned to a greater degree.

Q: There is a feeling that if it is delayed beyond January 26, it will be delayed indefinitely, because of the procedural difficulties under the new Constitution.

JN: I do not think so because, once a thing starts moving, in its very movement it gathers momentum which will take it through.

Q: Would that be before April 1?

JN: Even that I should imagine not. But one cannot say definitely.

Q: The fear is that under the new Constitution, there will be difficulties which are not noticeable in the present Constitution.

JN: I am not a constitutional pundit...⁴

Q: Would the Andhra Province question be taken up again after your return to Delhi from Colombo?

JN: We took it up long ago. Decisions have been taken. It is now only a question of the mechanics of it, which, for the moment, are being examined by the Finance Ministry and some other Ministries too. It is very difficult for me to say how long the mechanics of it will take. We have asked them to do it rapidly and as soon as possible.

3. The issues coming in the way of the formation of the Andhra Province were: the status of Madras city, the divisions of assets and liabilities, boundaries of the new province, particularly of Bellary District and the execution of the Tungabhadra project.
4. At this point a question was asked about framing of the budget for the coming financial year in view of the expected formation of Andhra Province.

Q: So that you will be able to judge when you get back whether it will be feasible before January 26.

JN: It seems to be exceedingly difficult for, apart from the financial difficulties, there are certain objectors on the scene too. It is quite clear that this affair has to be proceeded with in a manner that will not hold up normal business. It should not be something which will create all manner of difficulties.

Q: But there is an apprehension in the Government here that things have come to a point where further delay would mean that administration in this province would come to a standstill.⁵

JN: There is also the possibility that other things may come to a standstill by hurrying.

Q: No lady candidate has been elected from Madras to the Constituent Assembly. Do you think the position is likely to change in this connection?

JN: How can I help if elections have been held. You know I hold strongly that a large number of women should be elected. Even in the last Assembly, there were only 14 or so. And when any of them dropped out, they were replaced by men. The result is that the number has gone down.⁶ Perhaps you started with 100 per cent blank.⁷

5. The newsman was referring to the statement of T.S.S. Rajan made in the Legislative Council.
6. B. Gopala Reddi said that nobody dropped out from Madras Province.
7. Reddi said that three women were elected from Madras—Ammu Swaminathan, Durgabai and Mrs Velayudan.

2. To P.S. Kumaraswami Raja¹

New Delhi
January 21, 1950

My dear Premier,

As you are aware, the Government of India accepted the recommendation of the Working Committee of the Congress in regard to the formation of the Andhra

1. J.N. Collection.

Province. Since then your Government has been considering this matter and a Partition Committee, appointed for the purpose, has submitted a report.²

Our Home Ministry has placed all the papers in connection with this matter before the Cabinet. These papers are voluminous.

It appears now that the way to the formation of the Andhra Province is not as easy or clear as we had thought it was. We had proceeded on the basis of a firm agreement, on the principal issues, between the Tamil and the Andhra representatives in Madras Province. Although the Partition Committee has submitted a report based on a large measure of agreement, one leading member from Andhra has objected to some of its proposals.³ The Andhra Provincial Congress Committee has also rejected these proposals. Representatives of Bellary district have launched their protest.

Apart from these, the financial implications of partition are complicated and somewhat obscure and deserving of very careful study. It would be doing an ill-service both to Andhra and Tamil Nadu, if some wrong step was taken now in regard to finance or other matters, which might result in fresh burdens in the future.

Then there is the Tungabhadra scheme.

For all these and other reasons, which the Government of India cannot ignore, it has become manifestly impossible to take any step by the 26th January. As to when the step can be taken, it will depend on firm agreements being arrived at between the parties concerned. To suggest that the Government of India should arbitrate means that the Government of India should impose its will on large sections of the people. It is obviously not possible to accept complete agreement about everything. But it is not only possible but desirable for us to expect an agreement on all the major issues before we can proceed further. You can rest assured that there will be no delay on our part, if that agreement is reached.

The Home Ministry will be writing to you separately.

I am particularly anxious about one thing. I understand that since this talk of partition, the administration of your province is suffering. That is unfortunate and should be avoided. Whenever the final decision is taken, it will be given effect to immediately or as soon as possible. To allow it to affect the work of your province even previously is to do injury to that work.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. On 4 January 1950 the Madras Cabinet approved the recommendations of the Andhra Partition Committee. The main points were: (i) no delay in creation of Andhra Province in the larger interests of administration, (ii) precise formulae for the allocation of the assets and liabilities of the undivided province (iii) single chamber for the new provinces, (iv) a separate High Court for Andhra. The recommendations of the Establishments and Services sub-committee were adopted with a few modifications.
3. T. Prakasam's contention that until the new capital was ready, the Andhra Government, the High Court and the legislature should function from Madras city was turned down by the non-Andhra members. He therefore submitted a note of dissent.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
IV. Armed Services

1. The Services in a Free India¹

Men and Women of the Services,

I am glad of this opportunity to address you. During the last three years, I have met many of you, both in the civil and defence services of this country. I have addressed you, discussed many matters with you and worked in close collaboration with some of you. If I could have had my way, I would have liked to meet many more of you, so that we might know each other better, for we are workers in a common cause and much depends on the degree of our mutual understanding. Many have praised you greatly and many have criticised you with vigour, sometimes unfairly. That was natural in the circumstances, and it is possible to find among most of us, room for praise and room for criticism. Most of you have had to adapt yourselves within a short period of time to a new environment and to new conditions of work. I want to tell you after three years' experience that I have found you as a whole, loyal servants of the country and I have appreciated the way you have adapted yourselves to the new conditions, which faced you and the country. Most of you have had to work much harder than previously, because conditions demanded hard work and you have applied yourselves to this work with goodwill and a desire to serve this country of ours, which had at last achieved her freedom.

Those of you, who are in the defence services, have had to face trials and tribulations and have been put to a hard test, out of which you have come out successful. You have gained thereby the praise of your countrymen. You have gained something even more and that is self-confidence and faith in yourselves and your cause. But it is not only the men of the defence services but all of us, in whatever capacity we have laboured, who have faced trial and difficulty during this early period of our freedom and our capacity and faith have been put to the test.

Just at the moment when all our services as well as much else in the country had been split up² and where in a state of disorganisation, disaster descended upon

1. Broadcast from New Delhi, 7 December 1949. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.
2. The armed forces of pre-partition India were divided on a communal-cum-optional basis whereby predominantly Hindu and Muslim units were apportioned to India and Pakistan respectively. Individuals of other communities serving in such units were given the choice of opting for the country they wished to serve. The plan was executed by a coordinating authority provided by the Supreme Commander's headquarters under the control of a Joint Defence Council. The bulk of this reconstitution work was completed by the end of November 1947. With the departure of the British forces, the last contingent of which left India on 28 February 1948, the task of nationalizing the services was taken in hand. For this purpose an expert committee had already been functioning. As a result of its recommendations, the services of a small number of British officers, most of whom were specialists belonging to technical branches, had been retained. Except for them, the Indian Army was fully Indian, from the Commander-in-Chief to the juniormost subaltern.

us all, bringing not only death and suffering to innumerable human beings but also a travail of the spirit to all of us. While facing that and overcoming it, we set about building and constructing the structure, that had been partly shattered. Let us not praise ourselves for what we did, for so much remains undone. But let us at least recognise our achievements, for they are not inconsiderable. It is difficult for all of us to adapt ourselves to changing conditions and even when we do so physically, the mind lags behind. It must have been difficult for you, accustomed to a certain routine and way of work in a different set-up, to adapt yourselves to a new and heaving and seething democracy, just as it is difficult for others to develop the discipline that freedom demands. The process must inevitably take time for all parties concerned, and yet you have succeeded in a large measure in doing so. Every thinking person knows that the running of a modern government requires the machinery of a highly organised, efficient and loyal service. No government can be carried on effectively without them. So it was of importance that our services, faced by new tasks and new objectives, should be loyal and efficient and at the same time should breathe the new air and function in tune with the new set-up of democracy. I think the success, we have achieved in this, is satisfactory. But the ultimate test lies in the results that we achieve. How do we measure these results? The only real test is the advancement and well being of the people we serve, as well as, more especially, in a democracy, their goodwill. It may be that when times are hard, goodwill may not be forthcoming easily. But loyal and efficient work in a great cause always brings fruit, even though it may not be immediately recognised. You serve the nation in a variety of ways and in many capacities. Some have the responsibility of high office, others are ordinary soldiers in the army. In service as elsewhere discipline has to be observed and greater experience and capacity placed in a special position of authority. But whatever the rank or the grade, it must always be remembered that all of us are comrades, working for the same ends, and respecting each other, as comrades should do. We live in a society which has inherited great differences between high and low, and rich and poor. We cannot change that suddenly, but we work to the end that these differences should lessen, and that opportunity for progress should come to all. In all our dealings, we must remember the objectives we have and recognise the dignity of the individual and the work of labour, in whatever form or shape. It is only those, who do not labour for the good of the community and only consume the labour of others, that are a burden deserving of no encouragement.

Ours is a poor country, but it has tremendous resources and potentialities and we want to develop those resources and get rid of the curse of poverty and unemployment. Many of our superior services have been built up in a tradition, and in ways derived from a much richer country, and thus a kind of barrier grew up between them and the common man. We have to break down that barrier and to adopt gradually ways, which are more in conformity with conditions prevailing in our country. The civil and defence services of a country must be given proper

conditions to work in, and assurance and security. The labour is worthy of his hire. A service can only work efficiently, if it is a contented service and has an objective to work for. We have given ample assurances and tried to provide security and contentment. But it must be remembered that true security and contentment can only come from the goodwill of the people, whom we serve, and who are the ultimate arbiters of our destiny. We are passing through a period of economic difficulty, and it is necessary that all of us, whatever our station or degree, should share the burden of the day according to our capacity.

I am glad that the services have recognised this and in many cases have themselves offered to share this burden. There have been cuts in their salaries and compulsory savings scheme has been introduced. I know that this has hit many of them rather hard more especially our younger officers and that this will mean the tightening of many a belt. Yet, it is right that it should be so, for we must always remember that the burden is far the heaviest on vast numbers of our countrymen and the lowest ranks of our services as well as among the public generally. I am sure that everyone of you, would like to share this burden with others, and would not care to stand apart. The very knowledge that we are doing this with innumerable others, brings a community of feeling and a sense of satisfaction. It produces that bond, which unites people of whatever degree, in a common endeavour, and produces that strength in a nation, before which all obstacles fade away. We work not for today only but much more so for tomorrow. We build for the future. It does not matter much if today brings a little hardship, provided tomorrow is going to be better for our people.

Our services have to set an example to others not only of efficient service but also of high integrity and a complete freedom from communal, provincial or other bias. There are many disruptive and anti-social forces in this country, and it is often said, that the moral fibre of the nation is not what it was. Evil stalks the land in the shape of narrow communalism and opportunism and blackmarkets and the like have to some extent poisoned our trade and business. It is for the services to fight these evils and they can only do so, if they, as individuals, are men and women of character and integrity and selflessness. We have to fight evil wherever we find it, and not succumb to it or be passive and inert spectators of it.

Many years ago I read in the writings of George Bernard Shaw, something that moved me and found an answering echo in my mind and heart. He wrote: "This is the true joy in life, and the being used for a purpose recognised by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn-out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of elements and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy." Not many of us can rise to these heights, but it sometimes happens that a whole nation under some great leader or a mighty urge, raises itself, moulds events, and makes the history of its choice. So it happened when Mahatma Gandhi burst upon the consciousness of India and moved her people to great deeds by the magic

of his personality and his message. The Father of the Nation is no more with us, but his message is still with us, and we are his children, with something of the spark that he lighted within us. The great work that he started is half finished only and we have to go ahead without much rest or respite to complete it. In that historic mission we are all comrades and as soldiers of India we shall march together and complete the task. *Jai Hind*.

2. To K.M. Cariappa¹

New Delhi

28 December 1949

My dear Cariappa,

You will remember a small conference we had in my room a little before I went to America. You were present at this and so were the Defence Minister,² H.M. Patel³ and some others. Among other subjects we discussed the question of economy in defence expenditure.⁴ I laid great stress on this and pointed out the seriousness of our financial situation. We all wanted efficient and adequate defence services. But the expenditure we were incurring upon them was completely beyond our resources and was injuring all other activities of Government by depriving them of necessary funds.

You told me then that you were trying hard to economise and hoped to succeed. The Defence Minister told us then and later that he certainly hoped to reduce the expenditure by five crores and possibly more. I was not very satisfied with this rather small reduction.

The figure for defence expenditure then, so far as I remember, was about Rs. 157 crores. That was considerably more than 50 per cent of our total revenue.

Since my return I have, I think, mentioned to you as well as to H.M. Patel on one or two occasions the absolute necessity for reduction in defence expenditure and I gathered the impression that every effort was being made. To my great surprise I have learnt recently that, instead of going down, the defence expenditure has gone up with a jump and Rs. 171 crores are now being claimed for next year's estimates. I just cannot understand this and it seems to me that there is no appreciation at all of the country's present serious condition or of the grave dangers of our allowing our defence expenditure practically to swallow up most other forms of expenditure. I am alarmed. I have convened a meeting of the Defence Committee

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Baldev Singh.

3. H.M. Patel was Defence Secretary at this time.

4. On 31 January 1950, the Government announced that defence expenditure would be reduced as far as possible both as a measure of economy and a gesture of peace.

early next month principally to consider this problem. We have to pull ourselves up and not allow this drift to economic collapse.

We are all agreed that we should have efficient and adequate defence services. But what does security depend upon? The formula might be stated thus: Security depends upon defence services plus the productive machinery of the country plus the spirit of the people. If any of these is lacking, defence weakens. The best army in the world is rather helpless, if it is not supplied with equipment and fed with the sinews of war. Efficient defence services also become weak and isolated, if the spirit of the people is low owing to economic or other causes. After all the army is to defend the people and if the people go to the wall, there is not much left to defend.

If the proposed demands for the defence services are put at 171 crores plus demands for State troops etc., the whole figure comes to round about 180 crores. This is fantastic when compared to our total revenue. We are starving everything, health, education, development schemes, industrial growth. We are retrenching people and creating unemployment. We are reducing salaries. In fact we are doing many things that no sane and stable Government should do. We are in fact sacrificing tomorrow for today. And yet in spite of all these tremendous sacrifices all round, the expenditure on the defence services grows and grows and there is no realisation whatever of the seriousness of the situation that faces us.

From a purely political point of view, we can hardly face the world with a budget in which about 70 per cent of the revenue goes towards defence. Our credit goes down, our reputation suffers abroad, and we are looked upon just as some kind of a Balkan State which revolves round its army and does little else.

But the main thing is that we just cannot carry this on and unless we put a stop to it, we endanger the security of the country in a very fundamental way. We are stopping industrial progress and even production for the army. The economic situation is deteriorating, resulting in grave dissatisfaction among the people. All this means endangering security in a basic sense. If the people generally are miserable and unhappy, the country becomes weak internally.

I am pointing all this out to you, because I should like our Defence Chiefs to realise where we are and where we are going to.

I remember your telling me that we have not even got full equipment for all the people in the army. What then is the use of that army and how are you going to give it ammunitions etc., in time of need. You will have to rely on other countries and that is not a safe or happy position. Our immediate duty is to increase the productive capacity of the country which will not only increase the standards of the people but also produce ammunitions of war. Ultimately war is carried on more by this productive capacity than by men in the field. More and more modern war depends upon scientific research and industrialisation. Minus these two, no army machine can function for long.

It has therefore become absolutely necessary for us to reconsider this whole problem. I am glad that our defence services are in good trim and we can rely upon them in any emergency. But they will not remain long in trim, if we continue at the present rate of expenditure. Indeed we cannot do this, because there is a limit beyond which we cannot go.

I think the utmost limit for our army expenditure should be 150 crores for next year and no more. In order to do so, it may be necessary to demobilise some men. If so, let us set about it and do it, instead of refusing to face the problem before us. What we want is quality in our army and not more quantity.

I hope you will give earnest thought to this matter so that we can discuss it when we meet.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. To John Matthai¹

New Delhi
17 February 1950

My dear Matthai,

For some days past I have been rather worried about the growing crisis in our relations with Pakistan. None of us wants war. But we cannot ignore the possibility of an explosion. I do not myself think, in spite of recent developments, that there is going to be war. But none of us in responsible positions can take risks in such a matter.

I think that the next six or seven months are rather critical. More particularly, I think that the three months, March to June, are critical. The crisis is likely to lessen with the coming of the monsoon and round about autumn it will be much less. If this is so, then we have to be completely prepared, insofar as we can, during these coming months, especially before the monsoon.

This brings me to the question of reduction in our Army as contemplated by us and indeed as decided by us in the Defence Committee. I still hold to the opinion that some reduction is desirable from the point of view of sheer efficiency. But how far that should go is a matter to be carefully considered. There is another aspect, however, which is very important. I have little doubt that any marked reduction would be strongly resented by Parliament and by the general public in

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 10, pp. 127-128.

the existing state of affairs. Also that the reaction in the army itself will be none too good. Even though the reduction may be small, it may create an impression in the Army of insecurity, that is, various battalions may think the axe of reduction may fall on them some time or other. This will involve a fear of unemployment, as it is difficult enough to find employment now. The result might well be a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction in the army which will come in the way not only of normal discipline but also of effectiveness.

All these are serious considerations at a moment like this. I feel that we cannot ignore them. What then are we to do? I understand that some preliminary orders for the proposed reduction have already been issued by Army Headquarters. These refer first to the defence battalions (temporary) and at a later stage to some regular battalions. These defence battalions have been raised in various provinces, but mostly they are stationed in East Punjab and West Bengal. Any mention of disbandment of the defence battalions in Bengal at this stage would undoubtedly be stoutly opposed and resented by the Bengal Government. So also probably in Punjab.

In view of all this I am clearly of opinion that this process of disbandment should be postponed for the present. It should certainly not apply to any regular battalions. In regard to the temporary defence battalions in Punjab and Bengal, it should also not apply for the present. Whether it should apply to some temporary defence battalions in the rest of India does not make much difference.

I have just had a talk with Baldev Singh on this subject and I pointed out these considerations to him. Naturally he agreed. This involves a suspension or a postponement for some months of the decision of the Defence Committee. I think we have to face that.

I do not know to what extent this affects your budget. I would suggest to you that in your budget speech you do not make any specific statement which might commit us or which might raise some kind of an uproar in Parliament. You might repeat rather vaguely that we hope, subject to the paramount importance of maintaining our defence forces at a high level of efficiency for security purposes, to investigate all avenues of a reduction of defence expenditure.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To K.M. Cariappa¹

New Delhi
March 27, 1950

My dear Cariappa,

Reports reach me from various sources, including Members of Parliament, that the morale of the Army is going down both among the officers and men. Bribery, corruption and embezzlement of funds are rampant. It is stated that there is a widespread feeling that there is some kind of favouritism in the appointments and postings of senior officers. Also that senior officers are kept too long at headquarters in Delhi when the normal practice should be for them to go back to active service after a period. I am concerned about all these matters. Whatever the truth may be, the mere fact that people talk about these is bad enough.

I should like to know how matters stand in regard to the Meerut enquiry. This has been going on for a very long time and no report has been brought to my notice yet.

Another matter has been mentioned to me. This is in regard to the formation of a Guards Brigade. The historical background of a Guards Brigade is that it is for Kings and Emperors and receives special treatment. The name of course does not matter very much. But this background does not fit in with the present conditions in India and it is not quite clear why a special brigade should have been formed.

It has been stated that the State forces will be integrated with the Indian Army on April 1st. I gather that this only means financial integration and that otherwise the forces will remain separate units under the Rajpramukh. I do not like this very much, as it would mean the perpetuation of separate units, which are likely to be communal units. The loyalty of these units is likely to be more to the Rajpramukh than to India as a whole.²

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The State forces raised and maintained by the Rulers of former princely States, had provided military assistance to the Indian Army till 1948. After the integration, the forces of the States were taken over by the Indian Army. So far as the forces of the States Unions were concerned the Government of India had taken over the entire control of some of them while the administrative control was left with the Rajpramukhs subject to certain conditions. The Government of India also appointed a Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian States Forces, to coordinate the training organization and administration of these forces.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

V. The Hindu Code Bill

1. To G.V. Mavalankar¹

New Delhi
November 27, 1949

My dear Mr Speaker,

...In the work before this Session of Parliament there is the Hindu Code Bill also. As far as I can remember, there was a very long debate on this and I believe full five days have already been taken thus far. At this stage two further days have been allotted for it. I imagine that two days are hardly necessary now because of the long debate that has previously taken place and one day might well suffice. Of course, it may go beyond a day. That will be largely for you to decide. Government's view, generally speaking, is that a measure of this kind should, as far as possible, be considered in a spirit of compromise and they are fully prepared, at a latter stage, when a clause by clause consideration takes place, to try to accommodate other viewpoints. I cannot say, of course, how far these attempts will be successful. But I believe there is some feeling among large sections of the House that this approach is the correct one and will lead to a more rapid passage of the Bill. We hope, therefore, that after this stage of consideration is past there will be, first of all, some informal talks on this subject between those holding different viewpoints regarding the Bill, and later a formal consideration. I earnestly hope that this will lead to a lessening of the gap between the two viewpoints and a passage of the Bill by this Parliament before it is finally dissolved. It would be a great pity if all the work we have done on this Bill was wasted and nothing finally emerged from it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extract.

2. The Hindu Code Bill¹

Jawaharlal Nehru: Sir, I crave your leave and the indulgence of the House to make a statement in regard to the Hindu Code Bill and I trust that the statement I make will meet with the approval of the House.

1. Statement in the Constituent Assembly, 19 December 1949, *Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative) Debates, (Official Report)*, Vol. VII, Part II, 1949, pp.783-785.

When at the commencement of this Session I referred in the course of my remarks to the Hindu Code Bill, I said that Government attached a great deal of importance to this measure and they hoped that this consideration stage would be passed during this Session. At the same time Government were very well aware that there was a variety of opinion on this subject and a large number of people were interested in the provisions of this Bill, and, therefore, I had suggested then that we propose to follow a course which we hoped would lead to a broadbased agreement in regard to a number of controversial clauses in the Bill. I should like now to amplify that statement and to make clear the policy of Government in regard to this matter. We have had fairly prolonged debate on this Bill not only in this Session but in previous Sessions. We had set aside two days on this occasion and as the House knows, those days have been prolonged on two occasions. Government had no desire to restrict debate on an important measure of this kind and in spite of the fact that we have been very hard-pressed for time—and we have very important legislative measures awaiting disposal during this Session—we extended the debate on two occasions and indeed today was also fixed for it.

While we have no such desire to restrict this debate, naturally Government is hard put to it to find more and more time, still we are prepared to find more time because of the importance of the measure and the desire of some Members of the House. But there was another aspect to this question and that was this: that if we are going to consider this matter in a spirit of trying to find an agreement as far as possible, in regard to controversial clauses; if, as I said we are going to proceed on the lines I indicated right at the commencement, then, is it desirable for us at this stage, to carry on this debate and perhaps produce an atmosphere, or help in producing an atmosphere, which does not lead easily to that kind of settlement? That was an important consideration which Government had in mind. Right at the commencement, as I have reminded the House, we had that in view. It was no intention of the Government to proceed with this merely by virtue of a majority and compel acceptance of every clause of this Bill although there might be considerable variety of opinion in regard to it. The position of Government, so far as this Bill is concerned is this. We stand committed to the broad approach of the Bill as a whole. We are prepared, however, to consider every clause in a spirit of accommodation. Naturally, Government have put forward this measure as it is because they believe in it. But in such matters they desire to have as large a measure of support as possible. Now there is a distinction between that and this general consideration at this stage which is going on, and which they feel has been debated quite considerably, and a large number of Members of the House have participated in this debate. They attach importance to the conclusion of that stage of the debate so that they may take up the next stage of consideration, that informal consideration as soon as possible. Now that informal consideration cannot effectively take place in that way, until this first stage is ended. Otherwise we remain in mid-air, and we cannot get on to that next stage. So our proposal now is, and I venture

to place it before the House, that we conclude this debate, on this consideration motion as early as possible. I would not mind Government giving more time, even at the expense of other legislative measures; but I would submit to the House that if the general proposal to have this informal discussion is agreeable to the House, then it is desirable to go to that stage and not to vitiate the atmosphere by acrimonious debate any more at this stage.

When I talk about informal consultations, I should like to make clear what I mean. I say 'informal' not that I do not consider it important, but because I wish to give a measure of flexibility to that discussion so that my honourable colleague the Law Minister who has shouldered the burden of this Bill, and who I trust will gladly accept and give effect to the proposals that I have made, so that he can consult not only the Members of the Select Committee, but other Members of this House who are interested, and may even consult others outside this House. Now, that would be difficult if a certain rigid procedure was adopted, and also when you adopt a formal and rigid procedure, it becomes a little more difficult for that attitude of free and easy discussion and give and take which might prevail more easily if the procedure were more flexible and informal. Therefore, I make this proposal to the House, and I do submit that in this matter, having considered all the discussions and debate that we have gone through, this is a reasonable proposal which should meet with the approval of all sections of the House because it is an attempt, a real attempt on the part of the Government to carry something through this House and through the country with the largest measure of support. That does not mean that in any matter over which we may disagree violently, we give up our opinions or surrender to anyone else's judgment. No one expects any Member of this House to do that if he believes in something. But it is the essence of democratic procedure for us to debate and consider and try to convince each other and try to meet each other's points, but sometimes giving up something so as to arrive at a decision which can be enforced with the largest measure of consent. That is the procedure, I would submit to the House, that we should follow in this important measure also.

I do not wish the House to think in the slightest degree that we consider that this Hindu Code Bill is not of importance, because we do attach the greatest importance to it, as I said, not because of any particular clause or anything, but because of the basic approach to this vast problem in this country which is intimately allied to other problems, economic and social. We have achieved political freedom in this country, political independence. That is a stage in the journey, and there are other stages, economic, social and others, and if society is to advance, there must be this integrated advance on all fronts. One advance on one front and being kept back on other fronts means functioning imperfectly, and also means that the first advance also is in danger. Therefore, we have to consider this matter in this spirit, how we should advance on all fronts, always keeping in view, of course, that the advance is coordinated and meets with the approval of the great majority

of the population. I say this because, after all, we function as a democratic assembly answerable to the people of India, and we must carry them with us. Keeping that in view it is not good enough for us and for this House merely to be led. We have to lead and we have to give the lead, and in giving that lead we have to carry others with us, and we propose to give the lead in this and in other matters, but always carrying others with us.

This, therefore, is the procedure that I have detailed, that is to say, that we may put an end to the present stage of consideration of this motion by adopting it, and then the House may permit Government to take those informal steps which I have indicated in regard to consultation about the various parts and clauses. That might be undertaken so that when the matter comes up again, as I hope, at the next Session, it may have the support of a very great majority in this House and outside.

3. To B.R. Ambedkar¹

New Delhi

December 20, 1949

My dear Ambedkar,

As you know, I received a deputation on behalf of a number of people who are opposed to the Hindu Code Bill.² This deputation represented a number of organisations, though some of the bitterest opponents, like Karapatri,³ did not associate themselves with the deputation.

The deputation put forward the usual arguments and especially wanted the representatives of certain religious orders and denominations to be consulted. I told them that we were prepared to consult any person, but we were not going to lay down that any particular religious order must be consulted and certainly not that their advice must be taken. We propose however to proceed in a manner so as to give opportunity to any individual or group to have a say. It was our desire to find as broad a measure of agreement as possible.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. The deputation urged Nehru to reconsider the Bill since it aimed at revolutionary and fundamental changes in the Hindu society and insisted that social reform should be preceded by education. If the Government was determined to proceed with it, a conference of scholars should discuss various provisions specially those relating to religious beliefs and affecting social order.

3. Swami Karapatri (1907-1982); religious leader and Vedic scholar; founder-president of Ram Rajya Parishad after independence; founded Akhil Bharatvarshiya Dharma Sangh in 1940; opposed cow slaughter and Hindu Code Bill; author of *Marxvad Aur Ramrajya*, *Vedarth Parijat* among others.

They gave me a note, which I enclose. I suggest that when you are considering the Bill in detail with others, you might send for some of these people and give them a chance of saying what they have in mind.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To B.R. Ambedkar¹

New Delhi
March 2, 1950

My dear Ambedkar,
Thank you for your letter of 2nd March.

I do not know much about many of the people whom you propose to invite for the conference on the Hindu Code Bill. I hope they include some of the *Sanatanists* and the like.

It appears from your letter that you propose to invite the whole crowd together and have a kind of semi-public gathering. Would it not be better to see them in two or three groups. The larger the gathering, the more difficult it is to talk and set speeches are delivered.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
VI. Language Policy

1. To R.R. Diwakar¹

New Delhi

December 16, 1949

My dear Diwakar,²

Sardar Patel has sent me a copy of his letter to you dated 14th December.³ I sent you a brief letter myself on this subject. I largely agree with what Sardar Patel has written to you. In particular, I would lay stress on two or three facts:-

1) A.I.R. must not consider itself, at present at least, as a kind of literary academy for promoting any particular style of language, more especially on the literary level. Of course to some extent this has to be done, insofar as any language is used. But there must be caution and no experiments need be made, which raise controversy. Controversy cannot be avoided in a matter of this kind, but it might be reduced to a minimum for the time being. Therefore, it is desirable not to introduce innovations, because every change is criticised, however good it may be. People get used to something, but if it is changed, then argument arises.

2) The principal aim of A.I.R. should be to use the most widely understood language. We have to approach the masses and not select coteries. Our object is to be understood and not to teach a language, at any rate at this stage. We have to convey news, facts and ideas in such language as can be understood by the largest number of people. Naturally it is no easy matter to define this language precisely and we shall have to proceed by trial and error.

3) Urdu is certainly not a regional language, unless you call the whole of North India a region. It is not true, if I may say so (what Sardar Patel says) that it is the language of most of the four crores of Muslims in India. The Muslims in Bengal and Madras hardly know it and the Muslims of Bombay, most of them, speak a jargon which is very far from Urdu. Urdu, as a language, is largely spoken in the towns of northern India, not so much in the villages. In the northern part of the U.P. and in the Punjab even a villager talks it more or less. Therefore Urdu has to be treated not as confined to a particular region but as something spread out over large parts of India, rather thinly in places. In the Punjab and the U.P., it should be given a definite place. A.I.R. should also have some place for it. When I say Urdu in this context, I do not mean highly Persianised Urdu, but simple Urdu or Hindustani.

1. File No. 43(15)/48-PMS.

2. Diwakar was the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting at this time.

3. Patel had written that "A.I.R.'s language policy, while taking note of the official language must have due regard for the objective", which could not be confined to the propagation or promotion of the language question. It should be appreciated and understood by the ordinary person.

4) While our general broadcasts should be, as far as possible, in simple Hindi, which includes Hindustani, it is always possible to have specialised broadcasts on any particular subject in literary Hindi or literary Urdu.

Sardar Patel suggests that the matter might be considered by the Cabinet. Undoubtedly any important change should be considered by the Cabinet. But, with all respect to the Cabinet, I rather doubt its peculiar suitability for a decision on such a question. Nevertheless, if the question is raised, it is for the Cabinet to decide. Personally I would suggest that the question should not be raised as far as possible at this stage.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. To G.V. Mavalankar¹

New Delhi
March 17, 1950

My dear Mr Speaker,

Thank you for your letter of the 15th March. I am grateful for the trouble you have taken to write to me at length on the subject of translation of the Constitution. I am forwarding your letter to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

I confess I am unhappy about the method adopted. I am writing more as a lover of language as such than as a politician. I am eager that Hindi should develop and become more and more the common all-India language. But I am afraid that the method adopted by the enthusiasts for Hindi is likely to hamper this development and at the same time, to make Hindi not a living, growing and vital language, but rather a stilted and artificial one.

In regard to a common script, I can understand that Gujarati and Marathi should be written in the Devanagari script. But to write Urdu, at this stage, in Devanagari will be to produce something which is of use to nobody. Those who know Devanagari will read the original Hindi. Those who do not know it, will not be able to read the Urdu in Devanagari script. Each script and each language has a genius of its own. Hence the objection to Hindi being written in the Roman script. Urdu has a flavour which cannot easily be put in Nagari script. It represents also centuries of contact with Persian, and to some extent, Arabic. It would be a pity to break those contacts.

1. File No. 32(98)/48-PMS.

I fear my views on the language question do not represent what might be called the majority opinion in India and are not very popular. But it has been a matter of sorrow to me that in such a vital question as language we should forget all artistry and all beauty and become the slaves of some pedagogues and grammarians who have no conception of art or beauty or the music of words. Each word is a thing of power with a history behind it, calling up images in one's mind. No word can ultimately be translated with accuracy into any other language. One can only find some synonym for it which does not convey the exact sense. Translation becomes, therefore, if it is to be good, something divorced from the grammarian and the man with a literal mind. Otherwise it is dull and without effect or even real meaning. It seems to me a tragedy that our beautiful languages should be strangled in this way. A language, more than anything, represents the character of a people. Milton wrote long ago: show me the language of a people and I shall tell you who and what they are without knowing more about them. I think this is perfectly true.

I am a great admirer of Sanskrit, though I know little of it. I hope that Sanskrit will be studied largely in the future not only because of its treasures but also because of its conciseness. The history of Sanskrit literature is revealing. It might almost be the history of the Indian people from the earliest ages to recent times. I am not for the moment referring to the content of the language, but rather to the structure and vocabulary. We begin with Vedic Sanskrit with its amazing power compressed into a few words. This develops in the lovely classical Sanskrit, a thing of beauty and conciseness. Later this conciseness fades away and long and ornate sentences come in. Vigour gradually diminishes and is replaced by an artificial elaborateness. So one can imagine the Indian people gradually losing their pristine strength and vigour and getting lost in loose and elaborate thinking without much result.

We had and have an ideal opportunity for building up Hindi as well as all our other languages, so as to make them both beautiful and vigorous, expressive and concise. We are waiting for that opportunity, I feel, and going in the wrong direction.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. Science and Human Welfare¹

India's needs are so great and urgent that we cannot afford even in a kind of philosophical way to think and talk of other matters. I think that there lies the difference in the outlooks of underdeveloped and more developed countries. This determines the basic difference in India's approach to world problems and those of other countries, which people elsewhere do not appreciate.

As a person connected with the Government of the country, I ask scientists to help me not only by their advice, which no doubt would be worthy of consideration, but in the practical solution of vital problems.

The India of today has a background of nearly a hundred years or more of what might be called the colonial rule, which was dominated by the lawyer's mentality. Lately the businessman's mentality has come into the picture. The lawyer still plays a fairly important part as is evident during the framing of the new Constitution. The lawyer and the classical scholar are not quite competent to deal with the problems of the age. People used to think that the businessman was an eminently fit person for the job, but many people do not think so now. The businessman's outlook is narrower than that of the lawyer and the classical scholar. Therefore, it is being increasingly felt that the scientist's and the engineer's approach to the world's problems may result in these being solved. I am becoming more and more convinced that until our approach is more and more that of the scientist and of the engineer, we shall not be able to understand, much less solve, these problems, even though we might have the highest type of scholars in other fields. Our problems are to be tackled with the spirit of a man who does his work himself and does not sit in his office ordering people about.

Scientists are the modern counterparts of philosophers and *rishis* of old and, therefore, are entitled to honour and respect, and not to mere patronage.

Even scientists sometimes do not necessarily command this honour and respect which they deserve because they are inclined to quarrel among themselves or become highly theoretical and even metaphysical. If scientists are to play their proper role, they have to be dispassionate, objective and yet very vital persons. If scientists are not dispassionate and objective and allow themselves to be swayed by passion, they will not be able to function with what is called the scientific spirit.

These eminent men and women should not confine themselves to the deliberations of the conference alone, but should talk to our youth and make them feel the international quality of science. Men and women of science must inculcate

1. Address to the thirty-seventh annual session of the All India Science Congress, Pune, 2 January 1950, based on reports from *The Times of India* and *National Herald*, 3 January 1950.

a spirit of international outlook in the minds of India's youth who would have to bear the burden of future administration of India.

I also stress the need for cooperation between the politician and the scientist in the governance of the country. In the olden days, the men of knowledge had to go to those in power for their maintenance. Their work had to be dedicated to those who dominated that age. But now the scientist stands on the same foot as the politician. The scientists having become fairly important, the politician, whether he knew anything about science or not, now praises science all the time.

Whether we understand science or not, we are now certainly very much conscious of the fact that the modern world is dominated by science. Today we want the scientist to help us in our jobs. But we do not like his suggestions and even begin to think that he is interfering too much in other people's way of doing things. The politician neither follows the advice given to him by the scientist nor follows his own way. It is obvious that in India and many countries round about this is what is happening.

We have certain primary problems of great importance. Many other countries, whatever may be their social and economic problems, are having fairly higher standards of living. In these countries, where the necessities of life are provided to a great measure, the primary problems do not assume as great an importance as in our country. The people and the governments of those countries can think of peace and war, prepare for war and talk of peace as the case may be. In fact, in some places the two things go together.

In an underdeveloped country like India the primary needs are such that we cannot talk in any other terms except financial stringency and balancing the economy. Situated as we are, our basic desire is not to get entangled in the tangled web of power politics. Friction caused by power politics will lead to war. Everything we desire and work for in India requires peace and a calm atmosphere to strive for the development of the country so that we may fulfil those primary needs of the people. There is no doubt that in India there is a growing realisation of this fact that the politician and the scientist should work in close cooperation. The solution of all our social and economic problems depends on this cooperation and no State can afford to ignore this fact.

We got power and it was followed by difficulties and problems of extreme urgency. Whether we have faced these difficulties adequately or not, we were compelled to put aside vague conceptions and proceed with the urgent need of the hour. Today unexpected pressure has been brought to bear upon us in economic and other spheres with the result that we have to think entirely in terms of a rigid economy. All these difficulties came when we had thought of a vast number of schemes to raise the standards in India. In many ways, we in India are at a very low level. We have to solve our problems and overcome our difficulties. For this,

we want the assistance of scientists in as practical a way and as urgent a way as possible. Only science can successfully be applied to solve our social and economic problems. I am more and more convinced that this task can only be done by scientists and engineers. Scientists are looked upon by men of Government as useful people, but people who should be kept in their places. This seems to be the position of the scientists in the modern world.

I appeal to you not to think too much of science or metaphysics or hypothetical theories but become objective realists. You must believe in our course. Sometimes scientists are not passionate or objective and, therefore, passive and sway towards humbler motives. Then they cannot serve their scientific objectives.

I also appeal to young men and women of India to give up their nationalist sentiments now that we are free from colonial rule and are a sovereign nation and channelise their energies into constructive spheres. But if we still continue to show our narrow nationalist sentiment then our country, or for that matter any other country, cannot aspire to a great future or an honoured place in the comity of nations.

2. The Need for a Scientific Temper¹

...As I look at this fine building I think of the large number of our young men and young women patiently working there, dreaming sometimes, and producing results which will flow out and benefit our people in this country and the world. I think of this tremendous adventure that was science in the past and the tremendous adventure that I hope it is going to be in the future, and I am fascinated by this prospect and I feel how much better it would have been for me to be a director of this institute, if I had the competence, than to be the Prime Minister.

I often wonder if science is not going to meet the same fate as religion, that is to say, people talked in terms of religion, but they seldom behaved as religious-minded people. Religion became a set of ceremonials and forms and some kind of a ritual worship. The inner spirit left the people. Large numbers of people talk glibly about science today and yet in their lives or actions do not exhibit a trace of science. They think of science as some isolated area where there are test tubes

1. Speech at the opening of the National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi, 21 January 1950. From *National Herald*, 22 January 1950. Extract.

and other mechanical appliances but have no other relation to life, except sometimes to provide them some conveniences. Certainly science should and did provide conveniences, and it has indeed, built up the structure of modern life. But science is something more. It is a way of training the mind to look at life and the whole social structure. If science is truth then you must follow that truth. So I stress the need for the development of a scientific mind and temper which is more important than actual discovery as it is out of this temper and method that many more discoveries will come...

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
VIII. Art, Culture and Education

1. Culture—the High Flower of Civilization¹

...There is a great deal of talk today in India of what is called culture. Culture, in its wider sense, is a basic quality by which an individual or a nation is judged. It is the high flower of civilization. It contains, as it must, the genius of the race. It contains or should contain that wider outlook which embraces the world and all that the world has achieved. If the former is absent, that is having roots in the soil, then it becomes weak, lacks vitality and tends to be just imitative. If the latter is not present, then it is narrow and parochial and tends to become stagnant, cut off as it is from the advance made in other parts of the world.

Culture is essentially of the mind. If the mind is narrow, it shrivels. In the world today enormous changes are taking place everywhere and if we have to keep pace with these changes and developments, our minds must be open and flexible and receptive to these currents of progress and change...

1. Message for the Lucknow University Students' Study Circle, 2 December 1949. File No.9/37/49-PMS. Extracts.

2. To Abul Kalam Azad¹

New Delhi
December 14, 1949

My dear Maulana,

Yesterday I had a long talk with Dr Rex,² the U.N.E.S.C.O. observer at the seminar in Mysore.³ He struck me as a man of great experience and knowledge in the field of education and more especially adult education and literacy campaigns.

The result of this talk was somewhat disconcerting to me. The first and relatively minor thing that he pointed out was his surprise at not finding a woman member in our delegation when education is so intimately bound up with women everywhere.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Dr Fredrick Rex was the Associate Director of the seminar.
3. A seminar organised jointly by the U.N.E.S.C.O. and India was held in Brindaban Gardens near Mysore from 2 November to 14 December 1949. Inaugurated by Maulana Azad, it was attended by 60 delegates from Asian countries. The problem of rural adult education with special reference to illiteracy and health education was discussed.

In fact, other delegations had women who played an important role at the seminar. Ultimately, I understand, a woman was added to our delegation at his instance.

The more important reaction was that our approach to educational problems and more especially to literacy, according to him, was unreal and not likely to produce any substantial results. We think too much in terms of quantity and not of quality. We do not appreciate that education or even literacy is not a mere matter of recognising certain characters but also of comprehending the inner meaning of what they convey. If this meaning is not related to one's life's pursuit and occupations and interests, it is not comprehended and does not remain in the memory and so all the labour spent on it is largely wasted. He gave as an instance that Laubach's method⁴ of teaching literacy had led to disastrous consequences in many countries. Whether we accept Laubach's method or not we seem to be proceeding on the same unreal foundation.

Further he gave me the impression that more real progress has been made in some eastern countries like Indonesia, in spite of war etc., than in India. That is to say, they are looking in the right direction and laying more stable foundations. We function very much in the air, drawing up big schemes, which are not based on a human understanding of the problem or on the latest educational experience, which includes the psychological study of the problem.

Again, he said that most provincial representatives were just eager to defend their schemes and there was little in the shape of coordination or experienced thinking behind them. Altogether he seemed to have been greatly disappointed in India.

I am merely briefly stating the impression he created in my mind. You will no doubt, have the report of the seminar and give it full consideration. But the criticism of an acknowledged expert cannot be easily put aside. We have large schemes of ours, both at the Centre and the provinces and we want to go ahead with literacy campaigns and adult education. If Dr Rex's criticism is justified, then we should revise our plans and definitely give up the idea of quantity in favour of quality. You have mentioned to me several times about the lack of funds. The question arises whether the funds we require are going to be utilised for schemes which are inherently sound or not. It might be better to concentrate on quality at first and then try to spread out later.

I am merely putting some ideas before you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal

4. It was originally developed to teach Filipinos how to read. Literacy materials developed on the Laubach principle are characterised by the use of key words and word configuration to represent the various sounds of a language. The system has been identified with the expression "Each one teach one."

3. To N.V. Gadgil¹

New Delhi
December 19, 1949

My dear Gadgil,²

Your letter of the 18th enclosing the substance of a letter.³ This refers to our purchase of a picture by a foreign artist, Topolski.

I agree that Indian artists should be encouraged both publicly and privately. But it is a remarkable proposition to lay down that foreign works of art and foreign artists should be boycotted. Topolski painted a remarkable picture depicting the death of Gandhiji in a symbolic way. In the opinion of many experts it is a very fine picture indeed. Topolski, I might add, is a painter of international reputation. We have purchased this picture and it is in Government House now being hung up. I might mention that the picture was not painted at our request. He did it of his own accord and it was subsequently seen by us.

As I have said above, Indian artists should be encouraged in every way. But I do not yet know an Indian artist who comes up to the standard of first-class painters or sculptors abroad.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No.2(152)/48-PMS.
2. Gadgil was the Minister of Works, Mines and Power at this time.
3. It was suggested that instead of buying works of arts from foreign artists, the Government should encourage Indian artists and sculptors.

4. The Basic Wisdom¹

Mr Chancellor, Mr Vice-Chancellor and fellow members of the University of Ceylon,

I am very grateful to you for the honour you have done me. I do not quite know why I have been singled out from amongst my distinguished colleagues and

1. Convocation address at the University of Ceylon, Colombo, 12 January 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

called upon to speak on this occasion. Nevertheless, I wish, if I may, to express my gratitude to you, and through you to others in this pleasant island for their great welcome and for all that they have done for us during our stay here.

We have met here on a special occasion—rather a unique occasion—and whatever we may do at our conferences elsewhere, the mere fact of people from distant quarters of the world, from different countries of the Commonwealth, coming together to confer on matters of vital consequence is a matter of significance and a presage of the type of conferences that we may have in the future, when more and more people will confer together about the problems of the day, in all earnestness and without regard to those barriers which have separated us in the past.

In the citation about me, I was, I believe, referred to as a person, who had profound wisdom and political astuteness. I do not know how far I am politically astute. I must confess to you that the older I grow the more do I feel the lack of wisdom in myself. Perhaps, it may be that that very feeling is a sign of having some wisdom.

One sees in the world today so many things which please one and so many other things which appear to one to be so extraordinarily wrong that one wonders why this world of ours, having every opportunity of cooperating for the advance of humanity, yet loses itself always in conflict, in violence and in hatred. We see the clash of blind armies as it were. We see the reproduction in the modern age of something which we thought had been done away with in the past ages. In the past ages, we had in many other parts of the world—fortunately not so much in your country or mine—tremendous conflicts on some kind of religious dogma and people fought one another on interpretation of some dogma, sometimes even a metaphysical interpretation of some dogma. We see, today, people becoming dogmatic in fields other than that of religion, and conflicts arising from that dogmatic approach to human affairs.

I should have thought that in the modern world there were many approaches to life's problems, but certainly not the narrow-minded dogmatic approach. We may have a scientist's approach, a humanist's approach, and possibly other approaches too; but the dogmatic approach inevitably narrows the mind and prevents us from seeing much that we ought to see. In the realm of human affairs as also in international affairs, we find this dogmatic approach bringing in its train, conflict, want of understanding, hatred and violence. I do not know how we are to get over this; but unless we get over this narrow-minded approach, I have no doubt that we shall fail to solve the problems of the day.

One of the brighter features of this age is—and I attach a great deal of value to it—that the barriers that separated the so-called East from the so-called West are gradually disappearing. That is a good sign. But, at the same time, other barriers seem to be growing in the East and in the West. We meet repeatedly in conferences

and talk about the problems that face us. Sometimes we solve a problem or two, but then for each problem that we solve, half a dozen fresh ones crop up.

I remember that somebody made a calculation of the number of international conferences that were held after the conclusion of the First World War and before the commencement of the Second World War. It was a prodigious number of international conferences. I do not quite know if we have exceeded that number since the Second World War ended.

Anyhow, this is an age of international conferences. A conference is always a good thing, or almost always, because people, at any rate, meet round a table and discuss matters with good humour and even if they do not always succeed in finding a solution, the effort is, nevertheless, always worthy of being made. That in itself results in something that is good. But I have often wondered why there has been this failure in the past to find solutions to our problems. Is it due to a lack of wit in statesmen or to a lack of understanding? I do not think that is either, because they have been able and earnest statesmen desiring peace and cooperation. But somehow or other, solutions have escaped them. Why then is it so? I do not know; perhaps it may be that we work too much on the superficial plane, finding solutions to the troubles of the moment and not looking to the deeper causes.

I put it to you for your consideration because something does come in the way. With all the earnestness we may possess, sometimes we do not get over those old and new barriers which come in the way of mutual understanding. Then I think that, in spite of our vaunted civilization, in spite of the advance of science and technology, we have lost grip on some of the basic things of life, something that gives anchorage to life and standard, something with which we could measure value.

We have advanced greatly in science—I am a great believer in science—and the scientific approach has changed the world completely. I think that if the world is to solve its problems it will inevitably have to be through the means of science and not by discarding science. Nevertheless, I find that the sheer advance of science has made people, often enough unscientific, which is an extraordinary thing to say. What I mean is that science has become so vast and all pervading that scientists are unable to grasp things in their entirety and have become narrower and narrower in each individual subject. They may be very brilliant in some subjects, but they seem to have no grip on life as a whole.

In the ancient civilizations of India and Greece that one reads about one has, or at any rate, I have the sensation, that people, though much more limited in the knowledge at their disposal, certainly had an integrated view of life. They were not so distracted; they could see life as a whole in spite of the fact that they did not know as much, or nearly as much, as the average undergraduate knows today. Because of this integrated view of life, they had a certain wisdom in their approach to life's problems.

Whether that is true or not I do not know, because one is apt to look at the past with a certain glamour. It may be that I am wrong but in any event, one thing

seems to me to be certain namely, that we of today have no integrated view of life; that however clever we may be, however much of facts and knowledge we may have accumulated, we are not very wise. We are narrower than the people of old, although every fact has gone to bring us together in this world. We travel swiftly, we have communications, we know more about one another and we have the radio and all kinds of things. In spite of all these widening influences, we are narrower in our minds. That is the extraordinary thing which I cannot understand.

I put this to this gathering of university men, because after all it is for the universities to tackle this problem more than for any other organization. If even the universities do not teach some kind of basic wisdom, if they think in terms of producing people with degrees who want certain jobs, then the universities may have, perhaps solved, to a very minor extent, the problem of unemployment or provided some technical help or other; but they will not have produced men who can understand or solve the problems of today.

You and I live in Asia. Perhaps, one of the biggest facts of today is this new and changing phase of Asia. What is happening in Asia is a fact of tremendous historical significance. It is difficult to grasp it entirely or to understand it but I think any person must see that something very big has happened and is happening all over Asia. There is a certain dynamism about it. We do not like much of what is happening. We may like something of what is happening but whether we like or dislike it, the fact remains that tremendous and powerful elemental forces are at play in Asia. It is not good for us to sit in our ivory towers and look at them with dislike or disapproval. If we wish to play any effective part in this world of ours we have to understand them. We have to understand the basic urges behind them. For some three or four hundreds of years, a good part of Asia was under a kind of eclipse and there was a basic urge for political freedom for a long time.

If you read the history of Asia—it is a long, long history—you will find that during the greater part of these thousands of years, Asia has played an important part in world affairs. It is only during the last three or four hundred years that Asia has become static, quiescent and rather stagnant, in thought and in action in spite of all the virtues she might have possessed. Naturally and rightly, she fell under the domination of other more progressive, vigorous and dynamic countries. That is the way of the world and that is the right way. If you are static, you must suffer for it. And now, you see a change coming over Asia, and because it is belated the change comes with a rush, upsetting many things and doing many things that one does not like. But the major fact is that this big change is coming over us. I do not know—I do not suppose any of you know—what ultimately this change will lead to in Asia.

You and I live in this changing Asia of today. Many of you will have the burden of facing these problems which are not of today or tomorrow but which may last for a generation or more than one generation. The burden is yours because many of us whom you honour are in the afternoon of our lives and have, perhaps only

a few more years to work and labour, which I am sure, we will do to the best of our capacity and strength. And so, it is for you, young graduates of today, to prepare yourselves in mind and body and, as much as you can, in that deeper wisdom to understand these problems and to function actively and help in their solution. In the world of today it is not enough for you to take up a distant and academic attitude and look on and just advise others or criticize others. Every man has to shoulder his burden. If he does not, well he falls out; he simply does not count.

I have found, if you will permit me to say so, many of our young men and women—I am talking more of India than of Ceylon because I do not know much about Ceylon—full of enthusiasm, full of energy, full of earnestness, but singularly, shall I say, singularly academic or singularly cut off from life's realities. During their student days, they often debated and passed resolutions on this subject or that but afterwards, when they went out into the world, they seemed to think that life itself was a continuous debating society where they could pass votes of censure or criticize others without doing much themselves.

Now that is not a very helpful attitude. Perhaps, it is because of the fact that for the past many years, most of us did not have much chance of doing anything constructive. Our main job was to fight for the freedom of our country in a destructive way, in an oppositionist way, and not in a creative way. The result is that we cannot get rid of this negative and destructive outlook. Instead of helping to build something, we just sit down and criticize others who may be, rightly or wrongly, trying to build. At least, they are trying to build. I think that mere criticism is a very unhelpful and bad attitude to adopt. Today, what is required, is a constructive and creative approach in whatever country you may be. Certainly there is always something to destroy, something that is bad; but mere destruction is not enough. You must also build.

One thing more. I take it that a university is essentially a place of culture, whatever "culture" might mean. But that takes me back to where I began. There is a great deal of culture all over the place, in my own country too, and I normally, find that those people who talk most loudly of culture, according to my judgment, possess no culture at all.

Culture, first of all, is not loud. It is quiet, it is restrained, it is tolerant. You may judge the culture of a person by his silence, by his gesture, by a phrase of his, or, more especially, by his life generally. The peculiar narrow idea of culture that is spreading is that culture depends on the kind of headgear you wear or the kind of food you eat or on similar superficial things which, I do not deny, have a certain importance but which are very secondary in the larger context of life.

Each country has certain special cultural characteristics which have been developed through the ages. The cultural characteristics of a country are important and are certainly retained, unless, of course, they do not fit in with the spirit of the age, for each age has a certain way of its own and a culture of its own. So, by all means, adhere to the special culture of your nation. But there is something

that is deeper than national culture and that is human culture. If you do not have that human culture, that basic culture, then even that national culture of which you may be so proud has no real roots and will not do you much good. Today, more especially, it has become essential for us to develop, in addition to such national cultures that we may have, something that can only be called a world culture. There is much talk of One World and I believe that, at some time or other, that talk must bear fruit or else this world will go to pieces. It may be that we will not see that One World in our generation but if you want to prepare for that One World you must at least think about it. You have at least a culture to sustain you, and there is no reason why you should have your lives in narrow grooves, trying to think yourselves superior to the rest of the world.

Well we live surrounded by all kinds of dark fears in this new year. Probably, the prevailing feeling in the world of today is fear. Almost everybody is afraid of something; every country is afraid of some other country and, of course, fear is a thing which leads to all kinds of bad results and bad consequences. Fear is probably the most evil of sensations and we are living under the dominance of fear. If we could get rid of this fear to some extent, perhaps it would be far easier for us to solve our problems.

Besides fear, we see a great deal of hope and earnestness and a great deal of expectation of better things at the same time. We see creative and constructive impulses at work. We see also destructive and negative impulses at work. Well, I do not know which will triumph in the near or the distant future, but obviously it will be impossible for me and impossible for you to function adequately if we do not believe in the ultimate triumph of the creative and unifying processes of the day.

However that may be, even the attempt to work for some great cause, not only helps that cause but also helps us. We are not prophets, and we do not know what the morrow may bring but it is rather satisfying for you to work for the morrow of your choice. It brings something into your life which makes it worthwhile. If you align yourself to a big purpose, or something elemental, it ennobles you. Whether the reward comes or not, the mere fact of working for it is a reward enough.

We have to live in this world with all its degradation and all the evil that we see around us. But there is plenty of good in the world, and we have to see that there is plenty of what I, as a Hindu, would call the element of divinity in the individual, as well as in the group. If we can catch that and if we have our feet firmly planted on the soil and do not lose ourselves in imaginary vagaries and at the same time have a bit of that divine fire in us, too, then, perhaps, we might be able to balance ourselves and develop some kind of an integrated life. Somebody had said—and I would like you to feel that way:

Lord, though I live on earth, the child of earth, yet I was fathered by the starry sky.

I have come to Ceylon after ten years.² I have been here on two or three previous occasions also. Whenever I come here, I do not feel that I have come to a strange country. I feel very much at home. Your welcome and the friendly faces make me feel at home. Quite apart from that, as you know very well, you of Ceylon and we of India who are intimately related in our cultural inheritances and it just does not matter much what shape politics takes. You are an independent country as you should be and we are an independent country as we should be. Political barriers should not be allowed to come into play when culturally our people look to each other. When I come here, I think even more than I normally do—and normally I think a great deal—of that greatest and wisest and brightest son of India, whom you honour greatly and whom all of us in India and many other countries also greatly honour. The bond of the Buddha and all that it conveys is a bond between India and Ceylon which nothing can break. Whenever one thinks of the Buddha, one inevitably thinks of his great teaching and I often feel that, perhaps, if we think more of that basic teaching of the avoidance of hatred and violence, we may be nearer the solution of our problems.

I thank you for the honour you have conferred on me and for your great welcome. I wish you good fortune.

2. Nehru visited Sri Lanka from 16 to 24 July 1939. See *Selected Works* (first series), Vol. 10, pp. 5-40.

5. Aim High¹

I emphasise that the National Sports Stadium should not merely be a rich man's playground. If it is going to be confined to the select few for their occasional diversion it is not good enough for us to shout so much about it.

It must become a real centre for raising the level of sports and games and the physical well-being of the people not only in the big cities but in the countryside and the smaller towns. I stress the need for improving the physique of the people and raising the whole level of human life in the country. I hope that with all the

1. Speech at the foundation-laying ceremony of the National Stadium, New Delhi, 19 January 1950. From *National Herald*, 20 January 1950.

great deal of support that this institution is receiving, it will go ahead rapidly and build up traditions of sportsmanship and of a high degree of attainment in games and sports.

In everything we do in this country, we should aim at the highest level. In a large number of activities we are very far from a high level. Let us be frank about it. With our national pride we try to hide that fact occasionally but we cannot really hide it because it is obvious.

I have not the slightest doubt that the material we have in the country is splendid for every branch of activity, whether it is sports, whether it is technical and scientific or any other sort of activity.

The tragedy of this country as well as that of many other countries in the world is that the people do not have the opportunity. Human beings differ tremendously but where they should be equal is in the opportunities that they should get to progress.

It is true that not everybody can be trained to run a hundred yards under ten seconds. Only the very exceptional persons can do it. But if a large number of people are given the opportunity, it will be possible to get more and more exceptional persons out of them and the general standard will also go up. That is why it is most important to give opportunities to everyone to advance and progress.

I am surprised that in a big country like India there is hardly a proper racing track or rather a running track because I am not talking of horse racing. I think running is a most excellent exercise.

The only sports prize I have won in my student days was for winning a race event. Till fairly late in life, I did keep up running every morning, sometimes a mile, sometimes two miles.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur had stated that the club was anxious to name the stadium after me but I had preferred that it should be called the National Sports Stadium. I do object to this business of living names being bandied about. Only the dead should be named in this way. No living name, however, great or small, may be used to name any place, street, building, institution or anything else. It is a bad habit and once you allow it to spread, it may be that you honour some deserving persons but the far more undeserving persons may try to perpetuate their memory. Our municipalities and corporations are especially guilty of this. In some cities that I know of, one of the first acts of the municipal boards is to name all the streets after the names of the members of the board. I do hope that this practice of giving the name of a living person, however great he may be, will be given up completely and only the dead will be so honoured if they are worthy of honour.

LETTERS TO CHIEF MINISTERS

1

New Delhi
1 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you this fortnightly letter after an interval of two months. My colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, was good enough to discharge the functions of the Prime Minister, in addition to his own heavy duties, during my absence from India. He has addressed you two fortnightly letters during this period.²

2. There is such an abundance of subjects on which I should like to address you that I find it a little difficult to pick and choose. I could say much about my visit to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. I could discuss foreign affairs generally and the situation in the world with its possibilities of further crises and trouble. I could, in particular, refer to rapidly changing Asia and the emergence of a strong centralized State in China under communist control with all the far-reaching consequences that must flow from this.³ I should like to say something about the economic situation in India, the food problem,⁴ the sugar muddle,⁵ and the urgent necessity of our having clear objectives and a machinery to achieve them. Then again I could refer to the passing of our Constitution after three years of discussion and debate, and the significance of the 26th January when India will start a new chapter in her age long history.⁶ Internal problems affect us most and inevitably we have to pay the greatest attention to them. Ultimately it is the strength and stability of India that enables her to play any part in world affairs or to control

1. File No. 25(6)-49/PMS. These letters have also been printed in G. Parthasarathi (ed.), *Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964*, Vol. 1, (New Delhi, 1985) pp. 480-517 and Vol. 2, (New Delhi, 1986) pp. 1-21, 23-32, 37-62.
2. Letters dated 3 November and 14 November 1949. Printed in *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*. Vol. 8, (Ahmedabad 1973), pp. 382-412.
3. India stood for the recognition of the new Chinese Government by the United Nations, and believed that the recognition would help in preserving the peace in Asia and the world.
4. Increase in population had outstripped food production even before Independence came. Partition aggravated the position by taking away from India a greater proportion of cultivable land than population. Moreover, India had to feed the refugees. As a result, food shortage, even at its existing low subsistence level, amounted to over four million tons.
5. The price of sugar had been increasing following decontrol. A parliamentary inquiry was demanded to investigate into blackmarketing in sugar. It was stated that Rs. 6 crores of public money had been lost because of the sugar mills and middlemen. The Government of India promised to hold an inquiry, but only after the work of the Tariff Board which was then examining the question of further tariff protection for the sugar industry, was over.
6. The birth of the Indian Republic was to be exactly twenty years after the first taking of the independence pledge on 26 January 1930 as resolved at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress on 31 December 1929.

her own destiny. At the same time, world developments exercise a powerful influence on the domestic situation. More and more domestic happenings and foreign affairs become parts of the same picture and national problems are closely related to international problems. Perhaps, in the final analysis, there is only one major and basic problem in the world, and all others are small or big parts of it.

3. A great deal has been written about my visit to America. Every word that I uttered there in public has been reported. Since my return also I have said something about this visit. There is little that I can add to it. I have little doubt that looking at it objectively and impersonally, it was an event of some historic significance. Certainly the people in America looked upon it as such and, from all accounts, people in other countries also attached great importance to this visit. Whatever the personal factor might have been, this visit certainly became in the eyes of many an event in the development of a new historic process. It represents the ending of the period of Asia's subservience, in world affairs, as well as in domestic matters, to Europe and America. It was a recognition, in a sense an awareness of this major fact of our age. India, of course, counted in this picture. But it was something even more than India that I spoke about and that people felt. This does not mean that India or Asia have suddenly pushed themselves to the front and made their weight felt by virtue of any strength that they might possess, military or economic. They have no such strength today, except potentially and rather negatively. Nevertheless, the fact that something vital, historic, and of far-reaching consequence was happening in Asia came before the people of the West and compelled them to refashion their world view.

4. Probably the greatest single factor in Asia which interested or disturbed large numbers of people in the West was the emergence of the new Chinese State under communist control.⁷ Many people did not like this and were apprehensive of it. Yet the fact stared them in the face and facts cannot long be denied.

5. I was greatly affected by the warmth of the welcome that I received, both in the United States and in Canada. That welcome was not merely an official welcome, but had a strong popular element in it. It grew in volume and quality during the later part of my stay. This in itself indicated that what I was saying there was touching some chords in the minds and hearts of the people. Perhaps, this is the most significant part of it all. My speeches generally addressed to a variety of audiences, evoked some kind of an emotional response which surprised me. More particularly, my speech at Columbia University⁸ had a marked reaction

7. In Asia the danger came from internal economic conditions and from the communist appeal as a liberating movement whether from colonialism, in a country which was not free i.e. Malaya, Indo-China, or from internal poverty and unjust social and economic systems.

8. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol. 13, pp. 314-320.

on intellectual America and I received many letters about it from persons important in the world of politics, literature and science. It seemed to me that there was a state of mental unrest and disillusion in the minds of those who think. There was a sense of dissatisfaction at the general trend of world affairs and, at the same time, a sense of helplessness and doubt as to what should be done. What I said, simple enough as it was, appeared to supply some kind of vague answer to this questioning. That answer was vague enough and indeed I myself have no clear answer in my mind. Nevertheless, because my approach was somewhat different and because I spoke to them with all frankness and sincerity of purpose, I struck a responsive chord in their minds, and for the moment greatness was thrust upon me. All this led me to think that in spite of the conflicts and hatred and passions that consume our unhappy world, there was a widespread desire for peace and cooperation among nations and a search for some way to achieve it.

6. I approached the American people in all friendliness. I was not prepared to be swept away by any passing wind. But I was receptive in mind and frank in approach. As always happens in such cases, the reaction was friendly and frank, even where there was a difference of opinion. That again led me to think how wrong it is for us, as individuals or as nations, always to criticise the other and to point out defects in others. It is far better to think of the good points of other people and other nations, for we can learn from them, and indeed by pointing them out, we encourage them. If this psychological approach was adopted by us in our lives and in our policies, most of our problems would be easy of solution. That, I take it, was the basic approach of Gandhiji, and that was why he drew out the best in us, weak as we were. Even his opponents bowed down before that greatness of spirit and deep understanding of human nature.

7. I was interested in getting such help as was possible in the economic and technical sphere from the United States.⁹ I mentioned this, though rather casually. I realised that what was of more fundamental importance was the general reaction of the American people towards India and towards Asia. If that was friendly and cooperative, other things would follow. So, I concentrated on producing that friendly reaction. Perhaps, it is more true to say that I did not concentrate on anything, but that I offered our friendship in such a way as to convince them of our sincerity of purpose and to make them respect our holding on to our own views and our own way of life.

8. Thus there was no deal insofar as I was concerned, either political or economic. I left business talks to others like our Ambassador and Shri Chintaman

9. The U.S. was helping European countries under the Marshall aid programme, although the European economies were in a far better state when compared to India, and far less in need of help than her. India, however, received in 1949 a \$ 44 million loan for railway development and purchase of tractors from the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development in which the U.S. played a key role.

Deshmukh. I supplied them with an atmosphere which was very favourable for any talk or approach.

9. The United States is a great country, not only in power and wealth but in other ways also. In some respects, an outsider like me felt out of place there, and rather critical. But I felt how foolish it was for us here in India or elsewhere to sit down in our little corner and criticise others for their failings, calling them materialistic and worshippers of the almighty dollar and no more. That was true enough to some extent. But it was a very partial truth and it was a cheap way of describing a country. In the same way, some people criticise or hurl abuse at Soviet Russia. That criticism is often largely justified. But it is only partial truth. By judging a whole country in this slapdash way, we do not do justice to it or to ourselves. We merely confuse our minds and close them to many aspects of the truth. The fact is that the United States and Soviet Russia, vastly different as they are, have much in common also and have both very great achievements to their credit. Let us look at their achievements and learn from them instead of criticising their failings or what we consider to be their failings.

10. This general approach might be said to govern our foreign policy and, I hope, our general view of life. We hold to our anchor and refuse to be swept away by outside currents. We do not look at the world with eyes full of fear even though there is much that is bad and fearful in the world. We try to draw attention to the good in other countries and to profit by it ourselves. We try to understand the great forces that are moving in the world and reshaping it.

11. In China, these forces are most obviously at work and every day brings a change. It does not matter whether we like those changes or not. It is one of the major changes in history, and Asia and the world are going to be affected by it. Therefore, it was clear to us that we should recognise the new Government in China. We discussed this matter with foreign statesmen and, I believe, made them appreciate our argument.¹⁰ The position now is that the new regime in China is likely to be recognised in the course of some weeks by a number of countries.¹¹ We are not bound down in this respect to any other country. But it is desirable to function in consultation and in cooperation with others.

10. Nehru held discussions with leaders in the U.K., the U.S.A. and Canada. Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, made agreement on the Japanese Peace Treaty a condition before recognition was given to China. He also wanted India, Burma and Pakistan to support Britain, Australia and New Zealand in maintaining Hong Kong's *status quo*.

11. The Soviet Union and the East European countries had recognised the new Government in China in October. Burma was the first non-communist country to accord it recognition on 9 December followed by India on 30 December and by Great Britain, Norway and Sri Lanka on 6 January 1950. The U.S. had declared that the question of recognising the communist regime in China was premature to decide and the question of withdrawing support from the Chinese Nationalist Government could not be considered.

12. All the border countries of China are affected by these developments. India is not directly affected in the sense of any military danger. It is possible that the Chinese Communist regime may spread to Tibet, though that is unlikely before the summer of next year.¹² Even if it so spreads, there is no military danger from that quarter to India. The best guarantee of India's safety from that frontier is the inhospitable terrain and climate of Tibet as well as the mountains that separate Tibet from India. Our policy has been rather vague about Tibet. It has been an inheritance from British days. We have recognised the autonomy of Tibet under some kind of vague suzerainty of China. Strictly speaking, in law, we cannot deny that suzerainty. We would like Tibet to be autonomous and to have direct dealings with us and we shall press for this. But it is clear that we cannot bring any effective pressure to change the course of events in Tibet. Therefore, we must be cautious about the steps that we might take so as not to get entangled in enterprises which are beyond our strength. We have accepted certain facts as they are. I emphasize this aspect as there is often vague talk about India doing this or that in other countries, regardless of the obvious factors in each case. One thing is dead clear. We will not permit the slightest intervention, aggression or invasion of any Indian territory wherever it might be.

13. We are concerned with some of our border countries or States. Bhutan and Sikkim may be considered as definite parts of India from this point of view. Nepal is not. But it is too intimately related to India for us to view with unconcern what happens there internally or externally. During the last two years or more, we have been constantly pressing the Government of Nepal to take a realistic view of the situation in all its aspects. We have urged major domestic reforms as that is the only way to strengthen the country. Now, with the development of the Chinese situation, the internal and external forces of Nepal have become of even greater importance to us. Any threat to Nepal ultimately becomes a threat to us.

14. Our other neighbour country, Pakistan, is still a major problem for us.¹³ More and more it seems to me that we have to deal with a case of national neurosis in regard to Pakistan. Their newspapers and the speeches of their politicians are

12. India considered Tibet as a buffer State guaranteeing the security of India and China and facilitating friendly relations between the two along a mountainous border of 2000 miles.
13. Although an agreement was signed on 4 May 1948 to settle the problem of canal waters, Pakistan later stated that she had signed it under "duress". The problem of evacuee properties was proving intractable; no progress towards its solution was made at inter-Dominion conferences. The police action in Hyderabad became another problem of inter-Dominion relations. Pakistan had chosen to take the issue to the U.N., even after the Nizam wanted it to be withdrawn. A problem had arisen in September 1949 out of Pakistan's refusal to devalue her rupee, along with other sterling area nations, and the consequent deadlock in Indo-Pakistan trade.

hysterical and full of threats.¹⁴ Their actions in western or eastern Pakistan are such as to create difficulties and conflicts. It is true that our own people, after the terrible experience of the partition and what followed, are not entirely free from neurosis. But I believe that we are far better in this respect than the people and the Government of Pakistan. There are tendencies here in India to push us in the direction that Pakistan has gone. We are criticised for being weak and for appeasing Pakistan, and we are called upon to retaliate. I am convinced that there could be no greater folly for us than to move away from our own principles and follow in Pakistan's wake in the name of retaliation. We might have erred occasionally, but there has been no weakness on our side and no surrender on any vital matter. I think the only course that we can follow is to be firm in our policies and not to be hustled into a wrong direction either by Pakistan's threats or by the demands of some of our own people for retaliation. Retaliation, as such, is bad in principle. But there is something more to it. It brings harmful consequences in its train even for us. We get into a vicious circle of always trying to hit the other and being hit ourselves.

15. I find there has been some outcry¹⁵ about our evacuee property ordinance.¹⁶ I gave a great deal of thought to this before I went to America, because I do not want any weakness on our side on the one hand in dealing with this problem, and any wrong policy to be adopted by us simply because Pakistan was behaving very badly. I am quite clear that we must not surrender to any demand which is not based on justice. We have declared frequently that we shall treat all minorities in India on a par with the majority so far as rights are concerned. We have repeated that the forty millions of Muslims in India have nothing to fear and are equal citizens with others. We have to stand by that declaration whatever happens and this is not merely because of the justice of the case, but also because of its expediency, as any thinking person will see. In spite of this, some people want us to adopt

14. The Foreign Minister and the Finance Minister of Pakistan had told press conferences in the U.S. that there could be no question of India emerging as the leader of Asia. On 14 September 1949, Zafrullah Khan said in Lake Success that while paying lip service to the democratic principle of plebiscite India had throughout resisted the efforts of the Security Council and the U.N. Commission to bring about conditions for an impartial plebiscite. Soon afterwards, Finance Minister Ghulam Mohammed declared that any attempt to foist on Asia "leadership of any one country or any one individual" would have unfavourable repercussions, and Pakistan or her neighbours would not accept such a position.
15. On 4 December a public meeting organised by the Sindh Hindu Seva Samiti, Bombay, described the ordinance as "weak" because it did not cover the properties of all Muslim evacuees. Nor did it vest custody of such properties in the Custodian. Besides, the ordinance also allowed transfer of money to these persons for business or other purposes.
16. The Evacuee Property Ordinance promulgated in Pakistan on 15 October was ruthlessly enforced. Between 19 and 22 October, one thousand Hindus left Karachi after being deprived of their movable and immovable properties, compared to 580 persons who left Karachi in August.

a policy of vicarious punishment simply because Pakistan has gone a long way in that direction. Our Government is going to be no party to this kind of thing, and I should like your Government to appreciate this fully and to act up to it.

16. I have written to you on this subject previously and made it clear that in the implementation of the Evacuee Property Ordinance, there should be no injustice and no discrimination. Yet cases have come to me of individual Muslims being treated in a way which surprises me. Men who have taken part in our national struggle in the past and suffered for it have been harassed by the application of this Ordinance because some distant relative of theirs was in Pakistan. I mention this because I attach importance to our pledged word and to the policy which we hold and have declared.

17. Apart from Kashmir, there are two major problems as between us and Pakistan. There is the problem of evacuee property and that of canal water. There is also, of course, the consequence of devaluation which has led to a stoppage of trade between India and Pakistan. It seems to me that both the evacuee property question and the canal water question, if they cannot be settled by mutual agreement, must be referred to some impartial tribunal. We cannot carry on indefinitely with these running sores.

18. Kashmir stands upon a different footing. There can be no reference to arbitration or tribunal on the question of Kashmir for obvious reasons. We have, however, made it clear that we do not want this or any other question between us and Pakistan to be settled by force of arms. The only other method left is by some process of mediation, however long that might take. That is what we have suggested. Meanwhile, we continue where we are and prepare for any emergency. The U.N. Commission on Kashmir will soon report to the Security Council. We are sending a delegation consisting of our Secretary-General, Shri Girija Shankar Bajpai and Shaikh Abdullah, to Lake Success for this purpose. I think, on the whole, there is a fuller realisation of the Kashmir issue in the West than there has been in the past.

19. As you may have noticed in the press, there is going to be a conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers in Colombo beginning on the 9th January. I intend going to it. I cannot remain away from India for long and I hope to be back by the 16th January. This conference was fixed over a year ago. We are not, therefore, holding it in Colombo just because of recent developments in Asia, but, of course, these recent developments will be considered. Our recognition of the new regime in China does not depend upon that conference.

20. The 26th of January is not very far off and we shall have to observe it by a proper ceremonial. As has been our practice recently, we do not intend to indulge in any considerable pomp or pageantry in view of the economic situation that is fitting. We have also decided not to invite prominent statesmen or others from abroad on this occasion. There is one exception, however, and that is of President Soekarno of the Indonesian Republic. I should like your Government to think out

the arrangements for January 26th in your province. A committee is considering the matter here and we shall send you some suggestions. But, meanwhile, you may also appoint a small committee for the purpose. Apart from any major ceremonial, there are many minor changes to be made because of the transition to the Republic. Among other things, the flag that your Governor uses will have to change¹⁷ and the Crown will have to be removed wherever it is. It is not necessary to make structural alterations all at once. This can be done at leisure later.

21. I referred to President Soekarno above. I would have greatly liked to go to Indonesia on the occasion of the inauguration of the United States of Indonesia on January 1st. That is a historic occasion for Asia, and for us in India especially, it is a matter of great satisfaction. Our relations with Indonesia have been close and intimate. President Soekarno invited me to this function but, very regretfully, I have had to express my inability to go just then. It is not possible for me to leave India at that time. I hope, however, to go to Indonesia some time next year. I am requesting my colleague, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, our Health Minister, to represent our Government and people on this occasion in Indonesia.

22. I sent you a few days ago copies of Dr Trone's reports. I hope you have read them with the care they deserve. At any time, this analysis of the Indian situation in regard to industrial matters by a man of great ability and experience would have been important and helpful. In the present state of affairs, it has a peculiar value. We look at the Indian scene at close quarters and see it in detail and know a great deal about it. Because of that very detail, there is some danger of our losing perspective. Most of us who are engaged in the business of government are so overwhelmed with problems and day to day duties that we have no time to look at this broad picture and to think about it in relation to the world. It is, therefore, particularly helpful for a man with world experience, and with not only a technical but also a human approach to these problems, to look at India as she is and give his candid opinion. That opinion may not be correct in regard to details or even in regard to some overall judgment. For instance, I think that Dr Trone has not appreciated fully the agrarian situation in India, chiefly because he has had little chance to study it, except in small patches. Nevertheless, the broad perspective is there and the comparison with conditions in other countries.

23. As you know, for many years past we have talked about planning. I have been personally associated with this planning business since I was made Chairman of the National Planning Committee in 1938. One of my first acts on joining Government in September 1946, was to appoint an Advisory Planning Board of which Shri K.C. Neogy was Chairman. I was eager to get on with this business and we gave the Board three months to report as to the machinery of planning.

17. A new flag for the President and another for Governors and Rajpramukhs were designed by the Department of Archaeology. The Governor's flag had the State crest and the name of the State or province in Devanagari script against a plain saffron background.

The Board presented its report within the time stipulated, but that time the Muslim League had come in and they opposed every attempt at planning. There was continuous conflict within the Government and ultimately there was the partition. What followed made any constructive approach to our problems impossible for many months. So this question of planning was postponed from month to month. I tried to make a small beginning by setting up an economic unit as well as a statistical unit attached to the Cabinet Secretariat here. The Cabinet also appointed an economic committee of its own. Committees of statisticians and economists working in government departments were also set up to advise us. It was proposed to start a Central Statistical Institute, because it was felt that proper statistics were quite essential to any kind of organised effort, and more especially to planning. All these vague approaches were made, but nothing definite was done insofar as planning was concerned. We were caught up in the rapidly flowing current of events and had to face one difficulty after another. I feel rather strongly now that we made a mistake in not thinking in terms of organised planning earlier. We have had the cloth muddle last year.¹⁸ We had only recently the sugar muddle. No government can control either events or the many forces that go to make up the economic life of a country. At the same time, no government should be so helpless in the face of such developments as took place in regard to cloth or sugar. There is legitimate criticism all over the country about the way we handled or failed to handle the situation in regard to these matters.¹⁹ Our failure is not due to any lack of effort on our part but rather to a lack of appreciation of a particular situation and a lack of data to judge it. All this points to the urgent necessity of organised planning.

24. We should not expect any wonderful results to follow immediately from planning. The machinery has to be built up and has to gather experience and, through trial and error, to learn how to act efficiently. But the need for that machinery is obvious. Of course, everything depends upon the human factor and the quality of men who run the machine. I am sharing my thoughts with you in this matter.

18. In June 1943 when cloth prices soared very high, the Government resorted to price control to make cloth available to people at a reasonable price. In 1945 the control was further tightened by introducing cloth rationing and compelling the mills to use 90 per cent of their capacity to produce utility cloth. When the industry agitated for an increase in prices because of a rise in manufacturing cost the Government ended the control in April 1948 with the assurance to the consumer that it would be reimposed if the experiment proved detrimental to national interests. But the abolition of control resulted in the prices of cloth spiralling again. The Government reimposed the control in July 1948.
19. Shibbanlal Saksena's amendment in the Constituent Assembly asked the Government to appoint a committee headed by a High Court judge to hold an inquiry into the causes of the sudden fall in the sugar position. Thirumala Rao and Durgabai called upon the Government to bring the industry from the production of sugarcane to manufacture and distribution under the control of a central statutory authority.

We have come to no conclusion. But I have little doubt that we should come to a decision soon.

25. If a planning authority is set up at the Centre, it naturally follows that each province or State should have some counterpart of it, closely associated with the central authority. It follows that there must be the closest cooperation between the provinces and the Centre in this respect. Also, of course, that each department of Government, whether at the Centre or in the provinces, must coordinate its activities with other departments. There has been far too much independent functioning all over the place, and sometimes one department does not even know what the other is doing in some matter which concerns it. Provinces are autonomous and I believe definitely in provincial autonomy and a large measure of decentralisation. But there are certain tendencies which, in the name of autonomy, prevent coordinated functioning. That seems to me to be dangerous and harmful. Even the talk of linguistic provinces and a fresh demarcation of provincial boundaries, legitimate as it is in many cases, emphasises the separateness of provinces, as if almost they were independent entities and not partners in a common concern.

26. Another matter to which Dr Trone has drawn attention is the divorce, often enough, between authority and responsibility. I think there is much in his criticism and I have myself noticed how slowly governments function because of this hiatus. No big undertaking or business can be run on this basis. There must be, of course, checking and constant supervision. But to hold up work for petty sanctions from distant authority is not only to delay but waste money and energy. It is not sufficiently realised that time in this context is money. Every delay in a scheme is costing money all the time. Whether in business or in military affairs, policy is laid down, the proper officers chosen, and a large measure of freedom of action is given within the limits of that policy and direction. Constant supervision is, of course, always necessary, but in a way so that it does not impede work.

27. The basis of planning has to be proper information to be derived from reliable statistics. We lack these statistics. Hence, even in such an important matter as food production, we grope in the dark and proceed on figures based on guess work. We must function in a more scientific manner and, therefore, the building up of statistical work is of the highest importance. I hope that we shall have your full cooperation in this. I should like independent checks to be made of food production in various parts of the country by a competent authority. We may be able to organise this a little later.

28. I understand that the general food situation is more or less satisfactory and we are going ahead, in spite of some disasters such as the cyclone in Andhra. Some newspapers have been suggesting that we cannot make good, as we intend to, by the end of 1951. I want it to be clearly understood that on no account whatever are we going to weaken in our resolve about food imports by 1951. If it becomes absolutely necessary, we shall call upon the country to eat less by giving up a meal

now and then. There is a finality about this decision which must be understood by all concerned.

29. I am troubled at the prospect of some of our productive schemes being delayed or postponed because of the need for economies. We must economise on all fronts, we must have balanced budgets, and we may even delay many things that we want to do. But if we stop work on our productive schemes, then we affect the tomorrow for which we are working. It is not difficult to suffer hardship today so that we might have a tomorrow to look forward to. But if tomorrow also offers no prospect of relief, then it becomes more difficult to face even today. Therefore, we must make every effort to carry on with our productive schemes. Of course, there must be priority and we cannot spread ourselves out and undertake everything that we can think of and thereby delay everything.

30. I am glad that the services, both civil and defence, have agreed to various cuts in their salaries or to schemes of compulsory savings.²⁰ From the financial point of view this is desirable, but it is still more necessary from the psychological point of view. Our people generally must realise that the burden is shared all round. Sometimes, whispers reach me of some of our people in the services not liking these cuts or compulsory savings. I am sure this must be due to a lack of appreciation of the present situation. I have no doubt that every person in the services is anxious to do his utmost to help, both by his efficient work and by a small measure of sacrifice, the measures that we take to solve our economic difficulties. What is required not only in the services but also in the people generally, is a full realisation of our difficulties and of our objectives, and at the same time, a crusading zeal to overcome those difficulties by cooperative effort and to achieve those objectives. We have to get rid of the inertia and the inertness of the people who, often enough, just look to Government to perform miracles. Nothing big is done, unless there is that spirit and that zeal in the people. No problem, however great, is insoluble if we have that crusading spirit.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. As part of the Government's economy drive, a compulsory savings scheme was introduced covering all civil, defence, railway and posts and telegraph employees earning more than Rs. 250 per month.

New Delhi
15 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

The end of the year is bringing a multitude of problems and it is a little difficult either to keep pace with them or with other events that are happening in the rest of the world. In six weeks' time, India will take a historic step and become a Republic. Although we have been an independent nation for over two years now, with full control of our domestic and foreign policy, there is no doubt that January 26th will bring about a very significant change in our position in the world. We have decided that this change should be observed with due solemnity, but at the same time, with simplicity, and without too much display. Our programme for Delhi will be sent to you soon. You will no doubt draw up appropriate programmes for your province, keeping in line with what we do in New Delhi.

2. The change-over to a Republic naturally involves the change of many forms and symbols² in our public and governmental life. These will have to be replaced gradually. There is no necessity to rush through the process. The more obvious symbols might be replaced before the 26th or covered up such as in Durbar Halls and the like. It is not desirable to make a fuss about these changes and the less attention is attracted, the better. Some people suggest that many paintings and statuary, representing the period of British rule in India, should be removed. Many of them, no doubt, will have to be removed, though possibly some may remain. There is no need to start this wholesale removal suddenly. Whatever is done should be done with courtesy and so as to avoid any exhibition of ill will. You will have noticed the recent references made in the British House of Commons to the coming of the Republic in India. There were graceful and generous references by representatives of all parties.³ Having accepted a certain change, the British people have acted as gracefully as possible. We should also not be lacking in grace or courtesy.

1. File No. 25(6)-49/PMS.

2. For example, the emblem depicting the British Crown was replaced by the head of the Asokan pillar. The words, *Satyameva Jayate*, meaning 'truth alone triumphs' were inscribed in Devanagari script on the emblem.

3. Introducing the India (Consequential Provisions) Bill on 5 December 1949; Philip Noel-Baker, Secretary for Commonwealth Relations, declared that "the nations of the Commonwealth have shown that the winning of sovereign independence can make cooperation between governments and peoples even closer than before... In India we shall have a partner whose nationhood is already a major factor in Commonwealth and international affairs, a partner destined to material greatness..." The Bill was supported by R.A. Butler (Conservative) and Clement Davies (Liberal), and was passed unanimously. It was aimed at safeguarding the rights and privileges enjoyed by India and Indian citizens under the British law after India became a Republic on 26 January 1950. It was enacted on 16 December 1949.

3. I propose to remain in New Delhi till the end of the year. On the 31st, I am going to Nagpur and from there to Sevagram. At Sevagram, I hope to meet the members of the International Pacifists Conference who have already met at Santiniketan. From Nagpur I propose to go to Poona to attend a session of the Indian Science Congress.⁴ I return to Delhi on the 3rd January evening. After four days' stay here, I proceed to Colombo for the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference.

4. I have referred in the previous paragraph to the Pacifists Conference. I am going to Sevagram not to attend the conference and not because I am a pacifist in the ordinary sense of the word. Certainly, I desire peace, and a cessation of warfare. But as a member of a government which maintains armed forces, I cannot pretend to be a pacifist. Indeed, even apart from that, I cannot call myself a pacifist, and much as I appreciate the motives of the pacifists, I believe that peace is more likely to be ensured by other means.

5. New Delhi has been full of eminent foreigners. Many of these have come to attend the India-America Conference⁵ sponsored by the Indian Council of World Affairs.⁶ This conference has been wholly non-official in character and, therefore, I have not taken part in it, although I was greatly interested in the subjects discussed. But I have had the pleasure of meeting many of the delegates of this conference, who are eminent in the fields of science, education, journalism, industry, etc.⁷ I think that such conferences as well as the visit of eminent people from abroad is beneficial to India. Our vision is broadened by discussing world problems or Indian problems with visitors from other countries. Among these visitors have been also the members of the U.N.E.S.C.O. seminar for Asia, which has recently been held near Mysore.

6. Outstanding events in the domestic situation have been: the opening of the railway link with Assam,⁸ a Chief Minister taking the place of the Military Governor in Hyderabad, the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament and the agitation against it, the sugar position and the Grow-More-Food Campaign.

4. Nehru addressed the Indian Science Congress on 2 January 1950, the opening day. See *ante*, pp. 345-347.

5. The conference, co-sponsored by the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations, was held at New Delhi from 12 to 22 December to promote mutual understanding and research on problems of common interest and to establish regular contacts between the scholars of the two countries.

6. This was established in 1943 at New Delhi to promote the study of international relations and world affairs.

7. The American delegation consisted of 25 leading citizens of the U.S.A. including six presidents of universities, prominent industrialists and scholars.

8. The railway link between Assam and the rest of the Indian Union was established when a new metre-gauge line of 235 km was completed, linking Kishanganj in Bihar to Fakirgaon in Assam. It was opened for goods traffic on 9 December 1949 and for passenger traffic on 26 January 1950.

7. The railway link with Assam at last puts an end to our dependence upon Pakistan for railway traffic between West Bengal and Assam. This should bear immediate fruit. Parts of Assam have suffered greatly because of the lack of a direct link with the rest of India and recently, that is since the devaluation, there has been a great deal of distress in certain parts of Assam because of the stoppage of trade with Eastern Bengal. The natural markets for the hill-folk lie in Sylhet. These have been closed by Pakistan. The new railway link will give immediate relief to some extent.

8. The agitation against the Hindu Code Bill is certainly partly real and represents sincere opinions and feelings. But it is equally true that this matter is being exploited by various people for entirely different purposes.⁹ The demonstration before the Council Chamber in New Delhi was revealing in many ways.¹⁰ The R.S.S. again came out into the public and behaved not only in a political way, but in an aggressively and offensively political manner. I say this because we have been repeatedly told that the R.S.S. was a non-political body. This demonstrates that we cannot take these people at their word and have to be careful and prepared for contingencies. As you perhaps know, I have suggested that a committee representing various viewpoints should consider the Bill, so that we might deal with it with as large a measure of agreement as possible and with such modifications as may be necessary.

9. The sugar position continues to be unsatisfactory. There are so many authorities and people involved in this that it is not easy to apportion blame. We are inviting you to send representatives to an emergent meeting to be held in a few days' time to consider the sugar problem. In this, as in other matters, we have to consider the question in its national aspect and not in its provincial aspects.

10. One of our great difficulties in judging of any situation has been the lack of statistical data. Probably, the Grow-More-Food Campaign has suffered more from this lack than any other activity of Government. It has thus become necessary to organise and develop our statistical activities as early as possible.

11. The sugar problem is only a relatively minor part of our general economic problem. It has attracted a great deal of attention, partly because it affects the vocal section of the community, and partly because there is a general belief that Government have muddled. It brings into prominence the competing claims of the town-dweller and consumer and the rural producer. In regard to our larger economic problem, I sent you some time ago Dr Trone's report and some of you

9. For instance, a resolution was passed by the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha which characterised the Bill as opposed to the tenets of Hindu religion and urged the Government to withdraw it.

10. On 12 December, when Parliament resumed consideration of the Hindu Code Bill, there was a vociferous demonstration outside Parliament House by about 500 people who burned Gandhi caps and effigies, and raised such slogans as "Down with the Hindu Code Bill" and "Down with the Nehru Government."

have been good enough to send me your comments on it. We shall have to consider this entire question fully before long. Dr Trone's report was naturally based on a fairly brief survey of industrial conditions in India. He referred casually to agricultural conditions also. It was not a comprehensive report, but it did bring out vividly a number of defects in our organisational set-up in regard to industry. Many of those defects are obvious enough. The real question that arises is how to remove these defects. A planning organisation is suggested and, on the whole, there is agreement on the need for planning, but opinions differ as to the nature and powers of the planning authority. Most of us, whether we are politicians or servicemen, look upon these problems from a theoretical and official point of view. That is important, of course, but an even more important aspect is the engineers and the technicians. Unless these two are combined, a full picture is not seen.

12. The structure of our governments and their past work did not have much to do with the running of industry. Now, however, we are faced with the problem of encouraging and control of industry in many ways and our structure is perhaps not wholly suited for this. We have also to bring in the social outlook which is such a marked feature of the age and is in evidence in countries of varying economies, whether socialistic or capitalistic or something in between.

13. One way of looking at the problem of India is to concentrate on production. Ultimately, we must have more production in order to make any progress. Production means capital and wealth formation which can be utilised for progress. Our productivity today, even with our existing machinery, is terribly low. There are both technical and psychological reasons for this and some of these have been pointed out in Dr Trone's report.

14. During the past few years we have talked a great deal of planning and produced many grandiose schemes. As a matter of fact, we have not done any real planning on an all-India scale. Drawing up different projects and schemes is not planning. I have a feeling that we have been functioning very much in the air and have lost touch with the ground. Economic realities have suddenly pulled us back and we have to think afresh as to how we should proceed. One thing is clear to me and that is that the whole all-India picture must be kept in view. For each province to go its own way in regard to planning is bound to lead to waste and delay, as it has done in the past.

15. You must have received the report of the University Commission.¹¹ This report is worthy of your consideration. Soon we hope to have the reports and recommendations of the U.N.E.S.C.O. seminar which has recently been held in

11. The main conclusions of the Report of the University Commission were announced on 25 August 1949. The report dealt with various aspects of education, including the medium of instruction, professional education, and standards of teaching. The main thrust of the report was towards making education more Indian in character.

Mysore.¹² I have been discussing the subject of adult education and literacy campaigns with a very able and experienced member of this seminar. The impression he gave me was that in his view our attempts at spreading education rapidly were not happily conceived and were not likely to yield results. We have been aiming at quantity and not quality. Literacy by itself does little good and in fact there is a quick relapse into illiteracy, unless there is some further development. Also the methods of removing illiteracy must be closely connected with habit, occupation and interest in life of the person concerned. Otherwise, there is no real comprehension, and what is learnt is soon forgotten. All this led me to think that we must look at our problems from a fresh viewpoint and thus avoid waste of effort and money.

16. The Kashmir question will be coming up before the Security Council within a few days. The Commission's report¹³ has recently come out. It is not a very satisfactory document and is largely a record of the labours of the Commission in the cause of peace and settlement. They are naturally interested in showing that lack of success was not due to any fault of theirs. Their recommendations are in favour of mediation by a single person. We are prepared to accept this principle, but the choice of the mediator has to be carefully made and he must be given ample authority to explore every avenue.

17. In China, the collapse of the old Nationalist regime is almost complete now. There is no effective opposition left on the mainland. The island of Formosa is now the headquarters of the refugee government. The question of recognising the new regime in China has been given a great deal of thought and consideration by a large number of countries. Our own position has been that there should be early recognition, and we shall no doubt recognise this regime. This simply means recognising a fact which cannot be ignored. We delayed recognition in order to await further developments in China and also to bring about a certain uniformity in action of various countries concerned. There can be no absolute uniformity for all countries. We shall probably have to come to a final decision about the date in the course of the next few days.

18. In Indonesia, the new United States of Indonesia will come into existence within the next fortnight. I was invited to go there on this occasion and I would have greatly liked to go, but it is impossible for me to leave India at that time and so Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has been asked to represent the Government of India. We shall soon be appointing an Ambassador¹⁴ to this new and promising State.

12. The seminar emphasized the need for improvement in socio-economic conditions of the people in rural areas for the success of adult literacy campaigns. It suggested various methods for ensuring cooperation between the governments and U.N.E.S.C.O. to achieve this goal.

13. The United Nations Kashmir Commission's report was submitted to the Security Council on 12 December 1949 with the acknowledgement of its complete failure to secure agreement as to the conditions for a plebiscite. The report was debated from 7 to 10 February 1950.

14. P. Subbarayan, former Home Minister of Madras, was appointed India's Ambassador to Indonesia.

With the Republic of Indonesia, we have been in the most intimate contact for the past three years. I look forward to this friendly cooperation with the Indonesian State as of high importance, not only for our respective countries, but for Asia.

19. In two of the Dominions of the Commonwealth, New Zealand¹⁵ and Australia,¹⁶ general elections have recently taken place, resulting in a change of government. In both countries, Labour Ministries have been ousted and more Conservative Ministries have taken their place. The previous governments of these Dominions were on the most friendly terms with us, and there was a certain community in outlook in regard to social and economic affairs. I do not know how the new Governments of New Zealand and Australia will conduct themselves in international or domestic matters. I am sure, however, that they will be friendly to India.

20. Our relations with Pakistan continue to be very strained. An additional point of conflict has arisen and this is the stoppage by Pakistan of a large quantity of jute purchased by us even before devaluation.¹⁷ This jute had been paid for, loaded on barges and was actually in movement when it was stopped. In other ways too, Pakistan has practically put an end to the agreement arrived at with us some months ago. We have to consider carefully what steps we should take and the consequences of such steps, which may well be serious for both countries.

21. In regard to the Grow-More-Food Campaign, it is very necessary to make the cultivators feel a certain enthusiasm for this work, and indeed to recognise that it is really their work, with government assisting them. For this purpose, it is desirable to constitute committees of villagers and to give these committees specific powers to reclaim waste land. This reclamation need not affect the ownership of the land. It does not seem proper that some owners should take no steps at all to use their land and should prevent others from doing so. Such waste lands might be given on lease for, say, three years. There may be some legal difficulties in the way, but it should be possible to get over them. Ultimately, we come up here, as elsewhere, against the conflict between the community's interest and certain individual's interest or lack of interest. The individual need not suffer in any way, but the individual should not be allowed to prevent progress being

15. Peter Fraser's Labour Government was defeated in the general elections held on 30 November, and the victorious National Party, led by Sidney Holland, formed the new Government.

16. On 10 December, the Labour Government in Australia was voted out in favour of a Liberal-Country Party Coalition. Robert Gordon Menzies became the new Prime Minister.

17. India bought from Pakistan Rs. 117 crores worth of goods annually, of which about Rs. 85 crores represented the value of jute. India could not buy jute at the prices fixed by Pakistan after devaluation because it could not sell the manufactured goods on the basis of that cost. Jute was loaded in steamers by private merchants—jute which was paid for in cash before devaluation and it was this jute which was held up by the Pakistan Jute Board. Pakistan also held up in-transit jute coming from Assam to Calcutta and agreed to let it go only when India retorted by withholding coal.

made. Another desirable approach is to emphasise the Grow-More-Food Campaign in relation to the benefit based on the community or the group in the village rather than on the individual. Probably, some kind of legislative action would be necessary to bring waste lands under cultivation, as well as to induce municipalities to compost all their refuse.

22. It is clear that in the long run the improvement of agriculture demands large-scale economic units. This is universally recognised. Unfortunately, we are tied up with small holdings and we are encouraging, even now, small-scale peasant proprietorship. Perhaps, this cannot be avoided. But it must be remembered that this is no solution of the problem. We shall inevitably have to develop large-scale cooperative farming. This can be done immediately and without any difficulty in regard to reclaimed lands, which should either be run as big State farms or on the cooperative basis. Even in regard to the smaller peasant-holdings, attempts should be made, wherever possible, to introduce some form of cooperative organisation. It is not good enough to say that this is against our age-long habits and might give rise to trouble. We cannot compel people but we can emphasise this form of management and production and distribution and, wherever possible, introduce it.

23. I should like to stress again the necessity of full non-official cooperation in our Grow-More-Food Campaign. The best of our officials cannot do much, unless they have this cooperation and unless they make the cultivators and others concerned to realise that this is their job.

24. We consider our problems, as we must, in relation to the conditions that exist in India. But those conditions are not static and we are living in a rapidly changing age. Even within India there are forces working for internal change which governments or people at the top are apt to ignore. These internal forces are powerfully influenced by what is happening elsewhere in Asia and the world. It is because of all this that an element of urgency comes into the picture. That urgency applies, most of all, to the food problem, but it applies almost equally to certain other essential undertakings. Any person who takes a static view of this dynamic situation will miss its significance and will plan wrongly.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

III¹

New Delhi

19 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

About a year ago I drew your attention to the economic situation in India and to the desirability of provincial governments not undertaking any changes which might involve a considerable loss in revenue. In particular, I referred to the policy of prohibition and proposals to discourage horse-racing. Many of the provinces appreciated what I had written and have generally avoided introducing any such measures which might affect their revenues considerably. Some provinces, however, have proceeded with them.

Provincial governments have autonomy in this respect and can decide as they choose. But I feel I must write to you again on this subject because it is a matter of the utmost consequence in view of our economic situation. We have been compelled to limit, suspend or even abandon, for the time being, very important projects affecting the well-being of the masses. We have done so with a heavy heart because it became incumbent on us to balance our budget and to keep our expenditure within our means. We have been living under some false impression that our means were greater than they actually were. No country can continue to spend, more than it earns, for long.

At the same time it is bad, both politically and psychologically, to stop those activities which are wealth producing or morale raising. It is bad to sacrifice tomorrow because of today's difficulty. We have had to face this dilemma and we are trying to find some middle way. Inevitably we are limited by our resources and we have to pick and choose as to what we have to give up in these straitened circumstances. Provincial governments have to face the same dilemma. Their own finances are affected and the loans or grants that they were expecting from the Central Government are also affected. They have rightly complained on this subject to us, pointing out that they had planned to start schemes, such as housing, etc., which were urgently required in the hope of getting help from the Centre, now that help is not forthcoming in the measure that it was expected.

In this context, perseverance with prohibition and other like programmes which diminish revenue means directly the giving up of urgent social schemes, such as education, housing, medical relief and sanitation, in addition to delaying some wealth producing activities. It seems to me that in this context it is most unwise from every point of view to proceed with prohibition, etc. The Central Government cannot be expected at any time, much less in the present state of financial stringency, to find money to replace the income that might have come from the sources which are being stopped.

1. File No. 7(102)/48-PMS. A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

If the issue is to be judged from any moral plane, I have no doubt that other social reforms are far more important than prohibition. Large numbers of people are living in miserable hovels which are a disgrace to our country. We hardly provide them with any amenities of life. Surely, it is far more necessary to progress along these other lines first, before doing something which casts tremendous burden on us and stops advance.

The political and economic consequences of this are also obvious.

Information has reached me that where prohibition has been enforced there is actually no less liquor drinking. Illicit liquor is made and is widely used. Corruption has come into an even greater extent than before. How far this is true, I do not know. But it is worthy of full enquiry.

In regard to horse-racing, I hold strong views that any interference with it is detrimental to the national interests from a variety of points of view.

I am writing to you rather strongly on this subject because circumstances are such that they demand frankness on our part. I should like you to give earnest consideration to these matters.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

IV¹

New Delhi
31 December, 1949

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you as this old year passes out and we start a New Year. This year, like its predecessor, has been a hard one for us. Only a great optimist will say that the New Year will bring much relief from our troubles and burdens. Yet, as the New Year comes, it brings a sense of fresh beginning and therefore a feeling of a new birth with all its hopes and expectations. I can hardly wish you a happy New Year. That is not only a trite wish but is also rather inappropriate. There is little of happiness round about us and a great deal of unhappiness. All I can wish you and hope for is that all of us will face our difficulties and problems with a stout heart and gradually overcome them.

2. There are certainly some signs of improvement in the state of the country. There is, I think, a slight but definite improvement in the economic position, and there are signs of hope in the food campaign. Both are important. At the same time, there is much that is distressing. Perhaps, the most unfortunate development

1. File No. 25(6)-49-PMS.

of the past year or two has been the growth of a barrier between governments and the people. This barrier is largely one of lack of understanding and lack of contact. I do not mean to say that members of Government do not keep in touch with the public. Many do. Nevertheless, this barrier has grown. Governments are too absorbed in their official activities to pay much attention to developing contacts with the public.

3. In the old days, government was completely isolated from the people and hostile to it. Undoubtedly there has been a great difference and certainly hostility has gone. And yet I feel that the gap between the two is still great and we tend to become more and more governmental and less and less popular leaders or popular workers. This is largely due to our being absorbed in governmental activities, which increase from day to day and eat up our days and part of our nights.

4. The conviction grows upon me that we can solve no major problem without the active assistance and cooperation of the people. We have to work for the people, but even that is not enough. What is required is that we work with the people also and produce a sensation in the public mind that they, the people, are workers in a great cause and for their own benefit. Once that sensation is produced, work progresses with amazing rapidity. Without it all our efforts are limited and do not go far.

5. The coming of our Republic is a landmark in our history. It is something more, as it forces us to think of our problems even more intensely than we normally do. We have to be clear in our own minds about our objectives and what we work for. Vague ideas and vague appeals do not carry much weight today. There can be little doubt that our administrative system, both in the Centre and in the provinces, badly needs improvement in efficiency and coordination. We have been thinking about this in the Central Cabinet and perhaps some changes might be made before long. But it is equally important for your government to bring about the necessary changes to increase efficiency and coordination. We have talked about planning for a long time without doing much in the real way of planning, which means a well thought out and coordinated effort not only in each province or State but also in the country as a whole. Behind that coordinated effort must lie a full system of statistical information. That coordination must extend fully to the relation of the Centre with the provinces and states.

6. Quite a number of competent observers have given us their impressions of India during the last few weeks. All of them have laid stress on the lack of coordination, not only between the Centre and the provinces but between different departments of governments, both at the Centre and in the provinces. They have also criticised the divorce often enough of responsibility from authority. We should profit by these criticisms and remove the obstructions that come in the way of speedy and efficient work.

7. It is necessary not only to have a planned economic outlook which governs our activities in various sectors and gives us a yard-measure for finding out from

time to time where we have succeeded and where we have failed, but we must also have a clear vision of our objectives in other fields. There are many people in this country who are producing confusion in people's minds by false slogans and cries. The Hindu Mahasabha has recently come into the field again with brave promises.² It is even talking in terms of socialism, although, socially speaking, it is a most reactionary body. But the prospect of elections drawing near, has galvanised it into some kind of activity and made it speak in a language which is peculiarly inappropriate for it, and which probably it does not even wholly understand. It does not matter much if they do speak that language. But it does matter when they go on talking about a Hindu State and about recovering the area that is Pakistan now.

8. Nothing could be more foolish than to talk in this way. It has no meaning, but it can do much harm. Unfortunately, since the partition especially, there has been a great deal of this narrow communal feeling in the country, both among Hindus and Sikhs. The Muslims in India are quiescent. The Sikhs talk the rankest communalism and claim all manner of communal rights. Many Hindus also talk in a language which is totally unbecoming for this country. I think it is time that this mischievous propaganda was combated in every way, because if this is not done, it may lead the country towards discord and disruption. Those who talk about joining Pakistan with India would end by splitting up India even more or making it weaker. Hence the necessity for opposing such sentiments. This narrow communal bias often hides itself under high-sounding phrases appealing to nationalism and patriotism and thus it attracts some people. It must be remembered however that this is, in its essence, a reactionary and disruptive cry, not a unifying one, however much it may be called so.

9. The R.S.S. has not indulged in any obvious public activity except for some ugly scenes at the time of the Hindu Code Bill debate. But all our information goes to show that their minds function as of old, and I have little doubt that they will act as of old, when they have a chance to do so. We must, therefore, be on our guard against these harmful developments.

10. You will have noticed that trouble and violence, presumably by the communists continue, in and round about Calcutta. This has apparently become

2. N.B. Khare, President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha, at its session at Calcutta on 25 December, said: "the Hindu Mahasabha stands for a secular or more correctly non-communal government where all people, to whatever religion or community they may belong, will be equal before the law and will have equal opportunities." He accused the Congress of wooing the Muslim voters and said the idea of a secular State showed a "confused and diseased mind." Savarkar reiterated that the Sabha stood for "Independent Akhand Baharatvarsha."

the headquarters of the Communist Party of India. Calcutta and Bengal have been peculiarly hard hit by the consequences of partition. They deserve all our sympathy. Calcutta has also a vast lower middle-class population which cannot get proper employment.

11. You will remember that we have decided to have elections in West Bengal by the beginning of the New Year.³ All our programmes have been upset by various delays, some of which were unavoidable. It has become a serious problem now whether it is even possible to hold these elections in time. So far as we are concerned, we would like to have them, but the burden lies on the provincial governments and we have, therefore, asked them whether they can discharge it properly.

12. After January 26th, we shall have an old-new Parliament and about a hundred new members will come to it.⁴ Probably soon there will be elections in most provinces to fill vacancies. I earnestly trust that your province will send suitable men, who can help in Parliament. In this connection, I might remind you that it would be desirable to encourage the return of members of the Scheduled Castes, as they are not adequately represented in Parliament.

13. As you know, the sugar position has given rise to a great deal of criticism and controversy. We have had a debate in Parliament⁵ and we have announced that we shall have a full enquiry. We propose to wait for the report of the Tariff Board before we institute any further enquiry. Any policy decisions will also be taken after that report is received. I wonder often why there is so much shouting when sugar is scarce. In other countries, people do without sugar, if it is not easily available, and in many countries it is strictly rationed still. But we, here in India, have grown so soft and so accustomed to what are considered the pleasures of life that if we are called upon to do without any of them, there is loud cry. Sugar is important, but not quite so important as all that. If necessary, we should do without sugar or reduce the consumption of sugar to a minimum.

3. The Constituent Assembly, which first met over three years ago to frame the Constitution, ceased to function in that capacity on the afternoon of 24 January 1950 and automatically became the Provisional Parliament of the Indian Republic. It was decided to hold elections under the new Constitution after the electoral rolls had been finalised on the basis of adult franchise.
4. The new members included those who were elected in bye-elections and those representing states which had acceded to India.
5. Shortage of sugar was the subject of several supplementary questions in Parliament on 30 November. Hriday Nath Kunzru remarked, "It is astonishing that in spite of the serious complaints with regard to the shortage of sugar, Government should not even possess information on this matter."

14. The suspension of the Indo-Pakistan Trade Agreement⁶ is a matter which might lead to serious consequences. We had no desire to suspend this agreement, but it became impossible for us to accept breaches of the agreement on the part of Pakistan and remain unmoved ourselves. We had to take this step as, not to have done it, would have landed us in greater difficulties. There has been vague talk about cutting off canal water supplies, etc. This is entirely misconceived and there should be no repetition of it.

15. Kashmir is again before the Security Council. We have recently received certain proposals made by the Chairman of the Security Council, General McNaughton. We did not like parts of these proposals, indeed we disliked them intensely, and we told the Chairman of the Security Council about this. We have now put in certain amendments to those proposals and we await further action by the Security Council.

16. Two events of high importance have taken place. One is the inauguration of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia. This is a historic event and for us in India, more especially, it has peculiar significance. The future of Indonesia is not going to be an easy one, just as we have not had an easy time. They will have to work hard and gradually build themselves up.

17. The problem of China has troubled us greatly. The position now is that practically the whole of continental China is under the new regime, which is predominantly communist. China has a strong centralised government and no country can ignore it for long. After full thought and frequent consultations with other countries, we have decided to recognise this new Government of China, as from today.

18. As this New Year comes, I have to remind you of the Grow-More-Food Campaign. This has been and is our first priority and I would not like you to slacken your effort in the least. We would like to help you to the best of our ability, and indeed we shall do so. But please do not look to the Centre always for every kind of help, financial or other. You must depend upon your own resources.

And so with all good wishes for the New Year,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. By 16 December, there was total breakdown of the Indo-Pakistan Trade Agreement as a result of the controversy over devaluation. On 23 December, goods traffic to Pakistan by rail and steamer was suspended till further orders. Supply of coal to Pakistan by India was also stopped.

V¹

New Delhi
4 January, 1950

My dear Premier,

I should like to draw your attention to a matter which I think is of importance. I hope I am not too late in doing so.

You are going to have elections for the new Parliament very soon.² I am writing to you about the necessity of having an adequate number of women members elected.³ Even in the Constituent Assembly the women members were very few.⁴ Of these some dropped out for various reasons and their places were filled by men. I think it is important that we should keep up and add to the number of women in Parliament. From every point of view this is desirable. I have no doubt that a sufficient number of women, at least as competent and suitable as men, are available.

In this matter perhaps an exception might be made to the general rule we have suggested regarding members of Provincial Assemblies who have been in the Constituent Assembly. That is to say, in regard to such women members, if it is considered desirable, they may be permitted to resign from Provincial Assemblies in order to stand for Parliament. There are very few such cases.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.
2. As the Constituent Assembly converted itself into a Provisional Parliament till general elections could be held under the new Constitution and as the Constitution did not permit members of Parliament to retain their seats in the State legislatures, several members of the Constituent Assembly had to resign. Bye-elections to fill these seats were held from 6 to 16 January 1950.
3. Only two additional women members were elected to the new Parliament.
4. There were eleven women members in the Constituent Assembly of whom four resigned as they were members of the State legislatures also.

VI¹

New Delhi
18 January, 1950

My dear Premier,

I am sorry for the slight delay in writing this fortnightly letter. As you know, I had to go to Colombo to attend the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference. I returned on the night of the 15th.

1. File No. 25(6)-49/PMS.

2. This is my last letter to you before the change-over to the Republic takes place. This change is coming about gradually and inevitably. Because of that perhaps, its significance is not sufficiently realized. Nevertheless, it is clear that the coming of the Republic is a very big landmark in our history and the beginning of a new era. It brings fulfilment, on the political side at least, of the dream of vast numbers of Indians for generations past. It is the fulfilment of our pledge. Yet, we all know that we have not yet ended our journey and a very important part of our pledge still remains to be redeemed. That relates to the economic condition of the people.

3. Problems of great magnitude surround us and many of us are apt sometimes to grow a little weary or even despondent because of these problems and the slowness of advance towards their solution. In the country there is no flaming enthusiasm, which is so necessary for great deeds and rapid progress. It is difficult to keep the people at a high pitch for a long time. Looking round, however, and taking a dispassionate view of the situation, I am convinced that India is making good, however slowly, and that the future of India is going to be a bright one. It may be that the next two or three years are difficult ones, but the final outcome is certain. I hope, therefore, that on the day when the long-sought Republic of India comes into existence, we shall look to the future with a stout heart and with confidence in ourselves and in our motherland. I hope that we shall try to forget, as far as possible, the conflicts and divisions that have invaded our ranks and the bitterness that sometimes creeps into our work. We must try to start afresh with open minds and open hearts, even for those who happen to differ from us. It was the sovereign method of Gandhiji to attract and convert even the doubters and the quibblers. Even more so we have to look into our own hearts and see where we have erred and what we have left undone. If we function rightly and with integrity of mind, other right results will also follow.

4. On this day it is also necessary that we should clarify our objectives and not allow ourselves to get entangled in the petty difficulties of today. Those basic objectives must be governed by that wide and tolerant outlook and the love of those who are under-privileged, which were so characteristic of the Father of the Nation.

5. The Commonwealth Conference held in Colombo did not arrive at any startling conclusions. Nor was it expected to in spite of what the press wrote about it. These conferences are for mutual consultation and mutual understanding from which, of course, a measure of cooperation results. But each country represented there is an independent country and has ultimately to decide for itself. The questions discussed were recognition of the new China, the situation in Indo-China,² the

2. The French had made an attempt to forestall anti-imperialist criticism by the establishment of the State of Vietnam with the former Emperor Bao Dai as its head to bring the Viet Minh to democratic path. The new countries of the Commonwealth feared that if the Emperor was diplomatically supported by the Western powers, the communists might be the principal gainers because they would argue that the West was seeking through a puppet regime to restore the old colonial system in Indo-China.

Japanese Peace Treaty,³ aid to Burma,⁴ and economic help to the South and South East Asia countries.⁵

6. As you know, we have recognized the new Government in China. There is still some correspondence going on with this Government as to how this should be given effect to. I need not remind you of the tremendous world significance of recent changes in China. Not only Asia but also Europe and America are affected by them and gradually a new balance is coming into evidence. Perhaps one of the biggest question marks of the age is the future development of this new China. On what lines will it develop, how will it meet its economic problems, how soon will it advance industrially or otherwise, and what will its relations with other countries be? The countries of South East Asia are, of course, most intimately affected. So far as India is concerned, there is no fear or question of any direct danger. India has no desire to interfere in any way with the decision of the Chinese people. She wants friendly relations with them. At the same time, she cannot permit any interference with herself.

7. You will remember that it has been decided to hold a preliminary conference in South Africa to consider the various questions which have arisen there in regard to India-born citizens and which have given rise to our conflict with South Africa. We are deputing Pandit H.N. Kunzru to represent us in South Africa for this purpose.

8. The Kashmir issue still remains on the agenda of the Security Council. For the moment, it has been rather pushed out by the dispute over Chinese membership of the Security Council,⁶ and it is doubtful if it will be taken up there during January. The efforts at mediation of General McNaughton have failed and it is clear that they cannot lead to any settlement. There may be a full-dress debate in the Security Council. If so, we shall welcome it. There may possibly be further attempts at mediation which we would welcome. But we have made it clear that such mediation can only take place satisfactorily in India itself. I am sorry to inform

3. It was decided at the Commonwealth Conference to set up a standing committee in London to study the Japanese Treaty.

4. Burma was promised aid of £ 7,500,000 from the Commonwealth.

5. The plan at Colombo called for a study by the Commonwealth of the needs of South and South East Asia and an attempt to coordinate aid to that area by setting up a committee in Canberra.

6. The People's Republic of China demanded on 18 November 1949 and again on 8 January 1950 the expulsion of the Kuomintang delegation from the Security Council as it considered its presence illegal. The issue was discussed in the Security Council between January and March 1950. At this time India and Russia acted together on the issue of inclusion of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations.

you that the attitude of the U.S.A. and U.K. Governments in this connection has not been at all helpful.⁷

9. Our relations with Pakistan, even apart from the Kashmir issue, are far from happy. So far as the jute question is concerned, that is, the stoppage of our jute by Pakistan, it appears that Pakistan has ordered the release of this jute.⁸

10. I think I have already informed you that we have suggested to Pakistan that a joint declaration should be made by both of us pledging ourselves not to resort to war for the settlement of any of our disputes. Such disputes should be settled by peaceful methods which may be negotiation, mediation, arbitration or by reference to a judicial tribunal. Pakistan's reply, recently made in their Constituent Assembly, rather evades the issue and refers to various disputes pending between us, as well as some which have no existence now.⁹ We are continuing this correspondence, but with no too great hope of achieving results, in view of the general attitude taken up by Pakistan. We pointed out to them that the whole object of a joint declaration was to relieve the tension between the two countries and thus create a better atmosphere for the peaceful settlement of disputes.¹⁰ If we wait till every problem is solved, then there is little need for a joint declaration.

11. Next month there is going to be a general election in the United Kingdom.¹¹ Whatever the result of this election, and whichever party is returned to power there, India is not directly affected. Even the diehards of the Conservative Party in England cannot interfere in any way with India. Nevertheless, this general election in the United Kingdom has a wider significance and importance and it may well have a bearing on the world situation. The big question there is whether the present Labour Government, with its general socialistic and planned approach to economic problems, will continue or not.

12. There has been some doubt as to whether Ministers in provinces continue after the change-over or not. There is no necessity for them to change or to resign. But they will have to take an oath of allegiance to the new Constitution.

7. India found that the U.S. and the U.K. took an attitude which was out of sympathy with India's interests not only on the Kashmir question but over other subjects including Hyderabad, Junagadh and treatment of the minorities, which she had considered within her domestic jurisdiction. In August 1949, Truman and Attlee issued parallel appeals to India and Pakistan asking that India accept arbitration. The proposals of General McNaughton were regarded by them as meeting the requirements of holding a free plebiscite.

8. On 8 January 1950, the Pakistan Government ordered the release of Indian jute which was in transit from Assam to Calcutta through East Bengal and held up at Barisal.

9. Liaquat Ali Khan replied on 17 January 1950 that "India's terms are too vague. In our view, the only way to promote peace is to resolve major disputes and a joint declaration will carry conviction to no one unless it is supported by evidence of some concrete action..."

10. Nehru replied to Liaquat Ali Khan on 18 January 1950 see *ante*, pp. 31-34.

11. In the elections held on 24 February 1950, the Labour Party retained power by a narrow majority.

13. You will have seen the statement I issued about elections in West Bengal.¹² I did so with great reluctance because it is not a good thing to go back on such a decision. But circumstances compelled us and it became progressively more and more difficult to hold any provisional election, especially as the general elections will be coming soon after.

14. We have decided about the formation of Andhra Province.¹³ But it is not a very simple matter to give effect to that decision. For our part, we want to expedite it as much as possible. But the various consequences, and more especially the financial ones, require careful investigation before any further step is taken. We cannot finalize anything till then. Objections have also been raised by some people in Andhra and in the Bellary district and that makes our task a little harder. I am afraid there is no possibility of this new province being formed before the 26 January.

15. I was very sorry to learn that in spite of my request to provinces, relatively few women have been chosen for Parliament. I think this keeping out of women is basically wrong and is certainly opposed to our general Congress policy.

16. The Akalis in the Punjab have declared that they do not accept this Constitution and they have even decided to boycott any celebration of it.¹⁴ It is open to them to do so, but it is obvious that certain consequences will follow. Their policy in the past has been a singularly unstable one, and I have been sorry to notice that they lack vision and perspective completely and approach big national problems from rather a narrow viewpoint. Some others have also declared their condemnation of this Constitution. It is open to anyone to like or dislike the Constitution or any law. But it is a dangerous procedure for any individual or for any group to range itself in a hostile manner and even go to the extent of boycotting the Constitution as framed. Any person may work peacefully for the change of the Constitution, but we cannot tolerate any insult to it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. Nehru stated on 8 January that it had been decided not to hold interim elections in West Bengal under the Act of 1935.

13. This had been proposed by Nehru on 12 September 1949.

14. The Akali Dal sought at this time not only the dismemberment of the country but also the subversion of the State by undermining the loyalty of the Sikh soldiers. In Delhi, the defiance of an order prohibiting the use of religious places for political purposes led to the arrest of Master Tara Singh. He was, however, released after a few months.

VII¹

New Delhi

2 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

This is my first letter to you since India became a Republic. The change brought no addition to our independence. Nevertheless, it was one of high significance and there is no doubt that the people generally all over the country sensed it as such.

2. The pageantry and ceremonial are over and we have to settle down now to our humdrum activities and labours. With one difference. Any big change like this compels one to think of what we are aiming at and how we propose to get there—objectives and ends, ideals and policies and methods. There is a tendency to look back and be retrospective, a tendency to look ahead, but above all, to look at the problems which surround us in the present. It is possible to make a fairly lengthy list of our achievements; it is also possible to make an equally lengthy list of our lack of achievements. Perhaps the biggest lack is a psychological one. In spite of occasional bursts of enthusiasm among the people, as on the occasion of the celebration of Republic Day, there is an inertness and passivity and a complete lack of enthusiasm, generally speaking, among the people. On the eve of a new phase in our history, what is most necessary is a flaming enthusiasm for the tasks in hand—faith, confidence, energy and the spirit of concerted effort. Do we find any of these today in India? Certainly in some measure in some people. But, certainly also, a lack of all of them in most people most of the time. Disruptive forces grow and people's minds are full of doubt as to what they should do and so they turn to criticism of others without doing much themselves. The tone of our public life goes down. We take the name of Gandhi, as we did before and as no doubt we shall continue to do in the future, and yet, I often wonder what he would say if he saw us now and looked at the picture of India.

3. We work hard and wear ourselves away and that itself gives some satisfaction. If people do not appreciate our labours, we tend to blame them and think that they are unfair to us. Yet the essence of democratic functioning is not merely that we do the right thing but also that we make others appreciate this. A good workman does not blame his tools, even though the tools may not be good. We have to work with the tools we have in human and other materials.

4. We face big problems, economic and political, and yet, I am convinced that the biggest problem of all is this psychological problem of raising the morale of the people and of turning it to enthusiastic effort. Many people in India lead a poor enough existence and some kind of suffering and unhappiness is their lot. Obviously we cannot put an end to this suddenly as if by magic. There is, perhaps, a certain inevitability about the gradual progress of a nation. That gradualness can

1. File No. 25(6)-50-PMS.

be speeded up somewhat, but where a whole nation of hundreds of millions has to be trained up, there is no magic way of doing it. So we should not be dispirited if the pace is sometimes slow, provided that there is movement and in the right direction. It is true that pace itself counts when evil forces also march, for if we do not move fast enough, that evil overtakes us and might overwhelm us.

5. Is our direction right, what are our objectives, and is our pace adequate? These questions no doubt occur to you, as they occur to me. We live in a world blinded by fear and hatred and the spirit of violence. And even though we talk of Gandhi and nonviolence, our own eyes are shrouded often enough and there is enough of violence and fear and hatred round about us. What a legacy we have inherited. This year 1950, the middle of the century, may well bring big changes in the world as well as in India. Are we aware of the big movements that are taking place all over the world? India cannot remain unaffected and indeed one can sense something happening even in the minds of the Indian people. Do we keep our ears open to that and keep in tune with it or are we too busy with our work and our activities to think of these urges and movements in people's minds?

6. You will forgive me for this rather unnecessary preamble to my letter. But I feel troubled occasionally by the turn events take and the lack of social consciousness and homogeneity that I see in India today. The communists, with all the idealistic element that is no doubt part of communism, have become bitter enemies of society and order in India and have practically become terrorists.² The communalists function on the mental plane of the fascists and Nazis. The Hindu Mahasabha comes out from time to time with the stupidest of proposals.³ And yet stupidity has a market, if it puts on some kind of a nationalist garb. Even in our Congress ranks, disruptive tendencies are in evidence. The capitalist elements in India are cursed and sworn at frequently enough and most ills are attributed to them. That is unfair. They are the product of our times and of our economic structure, and it is futile to blame them. Yet it is a fact that, generally speaking, our capitalist classes, like our land-owning classes, are singularly lacking in a social outlook, even though they may be patriotic and may desire to serve India. We talk of

2. Communist activities in South India led to the banning of their party in the State of Madras on 26 September 1949. In the Hyderabad State the communists organised peasants into guerilla forces and took possession of land and properties. They burnt foodstocks, police stations, post offices and private houses. In Telengana particularly they ushered in a reign of terror. Numerous cases of political murders and dacoities in Nalgonda District in 1949 were reported on 10 January 1950.
3. At its session held at Calcutta, the Hindu Mahasabha pledged its faith in Akhand Hindustan and in a resolution demanded repudiation of Pakistan and suggested reunion of India and Pakistan for the benefit of both. Mahant Digvijainath, General Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, said on 7 January 1950 that the Mahasabha was determined to bring about the reunion of Pakistan and India by all legitimate means. In Nagpur, V.D. Savarkar said that it was the proud task of Hindus to establish a Hindu Rashtra. Pakistan and Hindustan would soon be united under the banner of Akhanda Bharat.

capitalism, socialism and communism, and yet we lack the social content of all of these.

7. What then are we to do? First of all, we must never permit ourselves to become static in our minds and smug in our approach. There is no greater danger than that. We have to keep in tune with the masses of our people and try to win their confidence. We can only do so if we work to that end and produce some results. As I think I have told you before, we have not merely to work for the masses but work with them. We want the cooperation of all classes, and yet, in the final analysis, we must give first place to the masses of our people.

8. If we drew up a balance-sheet of our work during the past two years, I think we can legitimately say that in the international field, India has made great progress and has found a definite place for herself. We can say that the integration of the states in India has been a remarkable achievement. In regard to other domestic activities, I think we have made good in the improvement of transport. We have lately made marked progress on the food front. Some of the provinces have gone ahead with their zamindari legislation which is so important. Perhaps we might also say that the mere fact that we have carried on more or less with success, in spite of the perils and dangers that surrounded us, is no mean achievement. That is the credit side. The debit side is also formidable.

9. At the end of this year the general elections will be held and that will be a big test for all of us.⁴ It does not so much matter who wins the election and who does not. But it does matter very much that a strong and capable government should emerge out of these elections.

10. You must have read the President's speech in Parliament,⁵ a copy of which was sent to you. There is nothing very novel about this except the proposal to have a Planning Commission, and that is not a very new proposal. I am convinced more and more that a Planning Commission of the first quality is essential for us. I hope that before long this Commission will be announced and formed. Such a Commission can only work effectively if the States give their full cooperation to it. The States indeed may have to form their own small Commissions of this kind.⁶ Planning again depends very much on proper statistical information. Hence the necessity for improving our statistics. It must be remembered that statistics is not merely the business of collecting some figures and numbers but giving us a great deal of information about social trends and enabling us to judge the success or failure of any activity that we undertake.

11. Food remains, as ever, our primary activity. There has been much talk of our growing jute and cotton and these are essential for our economy. But let it

4. Elections were to be held between October 1951 to April 1952. Nearly 175 million people were to go to the polls. More than 3,800 seats had to be filled, 480 in the House of the People, and 3,373 in the State legislatures.

5. On 31 January 1950.

6. A number of States had set up planning boards to prepare and implement their plans in consultation with the Planning Commission.

be clearly understood that jute and cotton will not come in the way of our producing food, which is the first necessity. We must and will reach our target by the end of next year.

12. The last Food Conference held in Delhi⁷ brought out the necessity of combining the food and agriculture portfolios in the State Governments. This arrangement already exists in some of the States, notably Punjab, Bengal and Madhya Bharat, but in most of the States the two portfolios are separate. It is obvious that there cannot be coordinated effort unless food and agriculture go hand in hand. I would commend this to your particular attention.

13. There is also the desirability of introducing legislation which would assist the Grow-More-Food Campaign. Where this is done, the results have been very attractive and promising for the future. The mere fact of having such legislation results in an increased activity for growing food and produces a helpful psychological atmosphere. Legislation may be brought for bringing fallow land under cultivation, for compulsory irrigation of all land commanded by irrigation sources, for the use of pure seed in those areas where Government can provide it, and for the removal of pests and weeds. All these require a joint effort and legislation is meant to help in creating such a joint effort.

14. Just before the Republic Day, we had the visit of a number of Commonwealth Ministers, Mr Noel-Baker⁸ of the U.K., Mr Pearson⁹ of Canada and Mr Spender¹⁰ of Australia.¹¹ These visits are very desirable because these Ministers of other Governments get an insight into our problems and get to know our own Ministers. Nothing is more important in the world today than understanding each other. I think that all these people who have come here have gone back with a better understanding and greater appreciation of India.

15. The most significant and welcome visit, however, was that of President Soekarno and his wife.¹² They were a charming couple, deeply attracted to India, and their visit has drawn our two countries even closer together. I have been invited to visit Indonesia and I should very much like to go there.¹³ If possible, I shall try to go there about the middle of this year. Thakin Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, also sent me an urgent invitation to visit Rangoon.¹⁴ I could not go now but if I go to Indonesia, I shall try to visit Burma also on the way.

7. On 18 January 1950.

8. On 17 January 1950.

9. On 22 January 1950.

10. P.C. Spender (1897-1985); Australian statesman, diplomat and jurist; Member of Parliament, 1937-51; Minister of External Affairs, 1949-51; played a major role in launching the Colombo Plan; Ambassador to U.S.A., 1951-58; Judge, International Court of Justice, 1958-64 and its President, 1964-67.

11. From 16 to 19 January 1950.

12. From 23 to 29 January 1950.

13. Nehru visited Indonesia from 6 to 17 June 1950.

14. Nehru visited Burma from 20 to 24 June 1950.

16. Our relations with the new China have advanced a step further and in the course of a few days a representative of ours, who is at present in Nanking, will proceed to Peking, the capital of the new China, as Charge d'Affaires.¹⁵ He is a junior officer and cannot discuss any major problem. All he will do is to settle certain procedural matters and later our Ambassador¹⁶ will go there. I need hardly repeat, what I have said previously, that the emergence of the new China is the most important fact in Asia and the world today. What happens in China is the biggest question.

17. Bao Dai's Government in Indo-China is being recognized by the U.S.A. and the U.K. Governments.¹⁷ We have made it clear that we do not propose to recognize Bao Dai's or the other Government in Indo-China, Ho Chi Minh's. It seems to us that any recognition at this stage would be completely unrealistic and would entangle us in all manner of difficulties. Therefore, we are keeping aloof. Indeed Bao Dai can certainly not be considered independent, for France has retained authority in several important matters and there is a French army of over 100,000 in Indo-China.

18. We are not at all happy in regard to the developments in Pondicherry, where it is proposed to hold a plebiscite.¹⁸ The French Government have been giving us a great deal of trouble and we are feeling more and more convinced that this plebiscite will not be a fair one as we had hoped. Many of the suggestions that we had repeatedly made have been turned down. We have sent a message to the French Government pointing all these out. If there is no change in the attitude of the French Government, we may have to come to the conclusion that this plebiscite cannot be recognized.

19. The Prime Minister of Nepal will visit Delhi about the middle of this month and will stay here for a week.¹⁹ This visit is being made at our invitation because we wish to discuss important problems with him affecting Nepal and Nepalese relations to India. At any time, these relations are important to India as well as to Nepal. But with recent developments in China and elsewhere, this importance has grown. Unfortunately, in many ways, Nepal is a very backward country, and

15. A.K. Sen.

16. K.M. Panikkar.

17. There had been international pressure to prop up the puppet Government of Indo-China under the former Emperor Bao Dai. While Britain and the U.S. recognised this regime on 7 February 1950, Russia and China recognised the nationalist Government of Ho Chi Minh. The neighbouring countries of Asia hesitated to decide the question of recognition.

18. The municipal councils of Pondicherry, Yanam, Karaikal and Mahe, resolved on 21 March 1949 to hold a plebiscite on 11 December 1949 to decide about their future relationship with India. The plebiscite was postponed to 15 February 1950 as France and India could not work out satisfactory procedure for holding it. The plans to hold a plebiscite were later abandoned.

19. Mohan Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana visited New Delhi from 17 to 24 February 1950.

there has been a great deal of domestic trouble there and agitation.²⁰ We have been continually pressing the Nepalese Government to introduce adequate reforms and pointing out that this is the only way to deal with the situation and the possible perils that Nepal might have to face.

20. There will soon be a general election in England. That does not affect in any way our domestic or foreign policy. But undoubtedly it will be an important event in world affairs and may have far-reaching consequences.

21. You will have read about certain developments in eastern Pakistan. It is stated that the Pakistan police went to arrest some alleged communists in a village in Khulna district. There was a conflict between the police and the villagers resulting in some deaths. Thereupon, a large force of police and others started a reign of terror in a number of villages,²¹ destroyed them, looted them, raped many women and forcibly converted many people who mostly belonged to the depressed classes. This led to a migration to India, and about 12,000 persons are said to have crossed over upto now. Probably, as a consequence of this, there was an attack on Muslims in Murshidabad district resulting in a number of Muslims crossing over to Pakistan. Trouble in Murshidabad, however, was controlled fairly soon.

22. This development in eastern Pakistan is a dangerous one. If it spreads, it will not only lead to enormous suffering, but also to large migrations. We are trying to deal with it in cooperation with the Pakistan Government as well as the Provincial Governments of Bengal, East and West.²²

23. Some of the jute that was held up by Pakistan has now been released and has reached Calcutta. But this is only a small part of what was held up. It is said that the whole of it has been released, but it has not arrived yet. Because of this, there is some slight easing of the tension, but not much. The general stoppage of all trade between the two countries continues.

24. I am still in correspondence with the Prime Minister of Pakistan about our proposed joint declaration for the avoidance of war in the settlement of disputes. We have made little progress thus far. I am waiting for an answer from Pakistan to a long letter which I sent to the Prime Minister there. Meanwhile, reports from

20. Initially, India supported the autocratic regime of the Ranas by refusing to provide any help to the India-based Nepali Congress. But when India realised that the King was more popular than the Ranas among the people and Nepal required some facade of popular rule in view of developments that had been taking place, she decided to change her policy. The King was restored to his traditional position. India provided military, police, administrative and financial services and resources to the King to consolidate his position.

21. Twenty villages in Bagerhat, Moltarhat, Kachua and Fakirhat thanas in Khulna witnessed worse atrocities.

22. On 1 February 1950, the Government of India suggested to the East Bengal Government that a joint enquiry by the officials into the communal disturbances be held and immediate steps taken to control the situation.

Pakistan indicate a continuing activity in preparation of war.²³ We have to keep alert, but there is no reason why we should lose our heads or get excited about it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. For example, on 26 January 1950, the Minister of Industries spoke of Pakistan resorting to an "alternate course of action" in place of peaceful negotiations,

VIII¹

New Delhi
6 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I have received a letter from an American town and rural planner,² who has had experience in India. In this letter he refers to cottage and rural industries and makes a suggestion which might interest you. I am, therefore, quoting below from this letter:—

My impression is that though a good deal is being accomplished in the provinces, it is nothing like enough as compared with what is required, or as compared with the effort and expenditure being made. Nor do I think it likely that it is inherently possible for the governments to catch up with the problem and ever really "deliver the goods". I think the main reasons are two. One is that they have such a multiplicity of these industries, to all which they must give some attention, that they cannot adequately concentrate on all the ramifications of any one, which is what is required for real success in any one.

The second reason is that though the problem appears relatively simple because the problems even in any one industry are really extraordinarily complex, and require a special order of ability, experience and determination, and of freedom of decision and action, which are not available in government. For the problems are actually far more complicated than in the mass production version of the same industry.

In the latter you have a great concentration in one place; your supply problem is much simpler in one place than to get supplies to a thousand or several thousand villages and may be ten or twenty or thirty producers in each;

1. J.N. Collection. A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

2. Albert Mayer.

distribution and marketing are easier for the same reason; control of design and quality is infinitely easier. So it seems to me that what is needed is nothing like the usual type of man whose chief qualification is some degree of technical skill or experience, whose time and attention are spread far too thinly over too much diverse endeavour, but the highest type of large-scale executive and entrepreneurial skill and imagination and resourcefulness.

My suggestion is this: that such a man be induced to undertake to really reorganize and creatively and thoroughly organize all the aspects of one important cottage industry over one area (not necessarily and probably not desirably over a whole province), as a pilot project to show how the desired results are really to be encompassed. Or it might be called a mother project out of which others can grow and learn quite quickly, once the problems have really been vigorously posed, studied, solved in a thorough-going way in one, and the way has been shown.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

IX¹

New Delhi
16 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding event in India, during the last fortnight, has been the recrudescence of communal warfare on a fairly large scale in East Bengal and Calcutta. You will remember my referring, in my last letter, to certain developments in eastern Pakistan. This led to large number of persons, mostly belonging to the depressed classes, migrating to India. The stories of atrocities in Khulna district and the plight of the refugees excited people in Calcutta and there was some trouble there in certain Muslim localities. Fairly large-scale arson and looting took place there and a number of people were killed. News of this made matters in eastern Pakistan, which were bad enough already, much worse. In Dacca especially and elsewhere, there was considerable killing of Hindus and arson and looting. I shall not give you any details here, partly because they have been appearing in the press and partly because correct facts are not known yet. But it is clear that what happened in eastern Bengal was on a bigger scale than we had hitherto since August 1947. What happened in

1. J.N. Collection.

Calcutta also was on a considerable scale, though, from such accounts as we have received, the persons killed were not many. The situation is still far from normal either in eastern Pakistan or in Calcutta and there is always an apprehension of further trouble. About eastern Pakistan, I cannot say much at this stage, as the news received is meagre. About Calcutta, I can say that while petty incidents continue to occur, the general situation is well in hand. I think that the Chief Minister and his Government in West Bengal have handled the situation with vigour and speed.² Maulana Abul Kalam Azad went to Calcutta today. The main difficulty in Calcutta at present is the large number of Muslims who have left their houses and have congregated in other places for safety. Some of these *mohallas* have been burnt down. It is hoped, however, that most of these Muslims will return to their old houses.

2. What has occurred in East Bengal with its repercussions in Calcutta is serious enough. The only very partial consolation is that it might have been worse in the sense that it might have been more widespread and continuous. Of course, it is difficult to be certain yet as to what further consequences might occur, as the situation is still very abnormal. We appear to live somewhere near the top of a volcano and any spark tends to waken it into eruption. We succeed more or less in bottling it up again. But the volcano remains and we hear the rumblings of it. It is natural for our people to be excited at the news of terrible happenings in East Bengal, and then when retaliation takes place at this end, stories of it excite and inflame people on the other side. There is this action and reaction repeatedly and a vicious circle is created. How are we to get out of it?

3. We got caught in the circle of hatred and violence many years ago, when the old Muslim League started preaching Pakistan and the two-nation theory. That led to partition and the horrible consequences that followed. We had hoped that partition, painful and injurious as it was, would bring us out of that vicious circle. But then those terrible happenings took place in Pakistan and north India in August and September 1947. We had paid a very heavy price. I have no doubt that it was the presence of Gandhiji at the critical hour that saved the situation not only in Calcutta and Bengal, but also, a little later, in northern India. But the wound was too deep and the healing process could not even begin, because of continuous irritation. We seem to go on paying the price and it is not quite clear when and how this business will end.

4. Some people, chiefly in the Hindu and Sikh communal organizations, talk about forcibly uniting the country again. Other people criticize the Government for what they call its weak policy towards Pakistan. It is not quite clear what policy,

2. B.C. Roy informed the West Bengal Assembly on 9 February that his Government had taken measures to control the situation in Calcutta by (1) entrusting patrolling of certain localities to the armed units, (2) banning processions and meetings, (3) imposing of curfew from dusk to dawn in some parts of the city, and (4) rounding up of anti-social elements.

other than what we have been pursuing, they would like to be followed, unless it is war. If war is thrust upon us, as a self-respecting and proud nation we shall face it with all our strength, and because there is a possibility of it, so long as these troubles and tension continue, we have to be vigilant and prepared. But most people do not realize what modern war means. It is a terrible affair and almost an unending thing, bringing ruin to all parties concerned. It may mean foreign intervention and in any event, it means saying goodbye, for a long period, to any real progress of the country. From a purely military point of view, I am not afraid of a war. But looking at the whole picture, I am convinced that it is our bounden duty to avoid war as far as possible. We have therefore pursued a policy of firmness and, at the same time, of avoidance of war. It was in pursuance of this policy that I suggested to Pakistan that we would agree to a joint declaration for the avoidance of war for the settlement of any disputes between us. I have had no firm answer to this yet, and I doubt very much if Pakistan will agree.

5. There is another aspect to this question. If we have war or something approaching war, whatever the other consequences might be, it is clear that we shall not be able to help or rescue those vast numbers of people in East Bengal, who look to us for help. They will be completely bottled up in a violently hostile area and there will be no one to protect them. It has always to be remembered that every act of retaliation in one country or the other leads to a worsening of the situation and to greater danger to minority elements from the majority because passions are aroused. We get caught ever deeper in that vicious circle without being able to succour those who look to us for help. The only way to get out of that circle is not to do anything which is wrong both in principle and in its practical effects and which worsens the situation on the other side. Above all, it is essential that when such critical situations face us, we should remain calm and not allow ourselves to be rushed by the passion of the moment which does no good to anybody, least of all to ourselves.

6. Then there is the Kashmir situation. This matter is still before the Security Council. But apart from that, the leaders of Pakistan have been delivering aggressive and provocative speeches and constantly talking of war.³ Their press is even

3. On 5 February 1950, Liaquat Ali alleged while addressing a meeting at Rawalpindi, that India was preparing for war, and "assured" India on 27 February: "If India wants war she will find us fully prepared." Feroze Khan Noon said in the Pakistan Assembly: "If we in Pakistan realize that we cannot get Kashmir, I assure you, whether our government likes it or not, we will also go communist. I would go to the extent of saying that the people of Pakistan would much rather be a province of Russia than of India, despite what the democracies say." A pro-communist member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, Iftikharuddin, said on 19 January 1950: "Today's Chiang Kai-shek can be Nehru and not Liaquat Ali. India has arrested twenty-five thousand people's leaders', as against Pakistan's arrest of two thousand only. Hence she is attracting greater sympathy from the capitalist powers."

worse. It is not surprising that people in Pakistan, getting these one-sided, exaggerated, and even false stories, should get excited. An atmosphere is being created in Pakistan which progressively becomes more and more a war atmosphere. I doubt if the leaders of Pakistan want war because such a war would be exceedingly injurious to them. But, nevertheless, they are creating an atmosphere of war and are becoming more and more prisoners of their own words and exhortations. It is difficult for them to escape from this dilemma of their own creation. What then? I do not think that there will be any war between us and Pakistan, because there are so many factors against it, including our own attempt to avoid war. But we cannot rule out absolutely this possibility. On the other hand, if we escape a war with Pakistan during the next few months, then it is likely that things will tone down. No country and no people can live for long at that high pitch of excitement and war-mongering as Pakistan has indulged in. The coming summer is rather critical from many points of view. If we reach the late autumn without a major conflict, then I think it would be legitimate to say that conditions would slowly improve.

7. The result of all this is that we must be fully prepared for any possible development, but at the same time, we must avoid being dragged into the vicious circle of mutual retaliation. Our language should be restrained, and our actions firm and peaceful. Oddly enough, it is the people on our side who speak intemperately, who, in a sense, are helping Pakistan. Pakistan is facing enormous troubles, political and economic, in each one of its provinces. Their only hope is to cover up these difficulties and inner conflicts by playing upon the people's fears of India and directing them to other channels, namely, those of fear and hatred of India. That is an old tactic. I doubt, however, if it can succeed. But, in its very failure, it may bring disastrous consequences, if we play into their hands.

8. The trade deadlock between Pakistan and India and the economic consequences, that have flown from it, continue. Now that the International Monetary Fund has made Pakistan a member,⁴ there might be a way out in some form or other. The International Monetary Fund will have to fix the exchange value of the Pakistan rupee. We are also going to have some kind of a conference in Delhi with Pakistan representatives regarding this trade impasse.⁵

9. The Prime Minister of Nepal will be visiting Delhi within a few days for important talks with us. India has always naturally been interested in Nepal. We have no desire to interfere in its independence, but facts of geography compel both of us to have special relations with each other. In the present context, with the coming of Communist China, all kinds of new problems arise. As I wrote to you in my last letter, we think that an essential and urgent step is the introduction of adequate reforms in Nepal.

4. On 14 February 1950.

5. The proposed conference did not take place at this time.

10. We are still going on arguing with the French authorities about Pondicherry, etc. It is not easy to deal with these French authorities. There is a possibility of the proposed referendum being postponed. We have made it clear that unless certain steps are taken to ensure that the referendum is a fair one, we cannot accept it. As a matter of fact, it is quite inevitable that these French possessions should come to India, as we can never tolerate with equanimity the presence of these foreign islands in India.

11. The same questions, with even greater emphasis, arise in Goa. From all accounts, Goa is an extreme backwater from every point of view. We have frequent pin-pricks. We have deliberately postponed raising this question of Goa, as we wanted to deal with the French possessions first. But the time has come when we should make clear our policy to the Portuguese Government and we propose to do so.⁶

12. In South Africa an agreement has been arrived at to hold a round table conference. This agreement is certainly a sign of the parties trying to avoid disagreement. But the basic differences remain and will no doubt come out at the proposed round table conference. It is right, however, that we should make every effort to find a peaceful solution of a difficult problem. The problem of Indians in South Africa becomes even more difficult because it is, in a sense, related to, or rather it affects, the vaster problem of the Africans. The South African Government is afraid that any concessions given to Indians will be demanded by the Africans. For our part, we certainly want the Africans to go ahead and we do not want to come in the way of their progress. It is their country and their continent and we seek no special rights against them. In Africa, the situation becomes slowly more and more tense and there have been occasional riots and small uprisings of the Africans. Fortunately, our relations with the Africans are on the whole good.

13. Behind all these national and international troubles and conflicts lies a world situation marching, sometimes in a leisurely fashion, and at other times more rapidly, to major crisis. For the moment, Europe is relatively settled down and free from immediate crisis. The scene changes to the Far East. In the Far East, the major fact of this half century is the emergence of Communist China. This China has

6. In its first *aide-memoire* sent to the Portuguese Foreign Minister on 27 February 1950, the Government of India suggested that once the principle of reunion of these possessions with India was accepted through negotiations, "ways and means could be devised by friendly consultations between the Governments of Portugal and India," to implement it. To this the Portuguese Government replied that it was "unable to discuss, and much less accept, the solution proposed by the Indian Government."

made a treaty with Russia.⁷ That treaty does not necessarily signify that China has become a satellite country. It does signify that in foreign affairs especially, the Soviets and China hold together. Meanwhile, the Kuomintang Government, established in Formosa, is bombing Shanghai frequently. However much they may bomb and cause damage there—and this damage is largely to buildings and factories owned by foreigners—it is not at all clear how this weakens in any way the communist regime in China. The U.S. policy is rather complicated and somewhat contradictory.⁸ Indirectly they are helping the old Nationalist Government of China in Formosa, and yet, they express a desire not to intervene in Chinese affairs.

14. In Indo-China also the recognition of Ho Chi Minh's Government by Russia and China and of Bao Dai's Government by U.S.A. and U.K., etc., lays the seeds of major conflict.

15. The world is thus drifting towards major conflicts and possibly war. We hear of a far more terrible weapon of destruction than even the atom bomb. This is the hydrogen bomb and scientists tell us that the use of it may mean such vast destruction as to put an end to all civilized existence. It is odd to think that humanity, after the wonderful progress that it has achieved, should find its culmination in the hydrogen bomb and all that it represents. We in India cannot control or greatly affect these elemental forces that are moving great nations. At best we can try not to do the wrong thing and not to encourage this tendency of war. What success we may have in this attempt, it is difficult to say. It is at least satisfying to think that we have the strength of mind and purpose to try to steer along the straight and narrow path.

16. In our domestic sphere, there is, I think some slight but marked improvement in the economic situation, more especially in regard to food prices. There is also visible a gradual awakening of industry. On the other hand, there is much still which is disquieting. Above all, what troubles me is the state of the Congress

7. On 14 February 1950, a Sino-Soviet Treaty of "friendship, alliance and mutual aid" was signed in Moscow "in order to prevent, with joint efforts, the recurrence of Japanese imperialism and any renewed aggression instigated by Japan or other nations." The signatories agreed "to negotiate and agree on all international problems of importance which are relevant to the joint interests of China and the U.S.S.R.," and undertook to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity and not to interfere in each other's internal affairs. The Soviet Union also agreed to repudiate the treaty of 14 August 1945 negotiated with Kuomintang Government to restore the Chang Chun railway and rights over Port Arthur and Dairen and to grant long-term credits worth \$300 million to China.
8. On 5 January 1950, Truman had announced in Washington that U.S.A. would not provide military aid or advice to the Chinese forces in Taiwan. The Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, added that the President's announcement was a proof that the United States would keep the promise not to meddle in the internal affairs of China. Truman, at a news conference on 12 January, reaffirmed his "hands-off-Formosa policy." But the United States continued to support the Nationalist Government in Taiwan, opposed People's Republic of China's admission to the United Nations and would not recognize the new Government.

organization. I am not writing, for the present, as a Congressman, thinking of the party to which I have had the honour to belong. I am considering this matter from the larger viewpoint of the nation. Because our Governments are essentially Congress Governments, what affects the Congress affects those Governments and the country. There is going to be a meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Delhi very soon.⁹ But that will largely confine itself to certain constitutional changes.¹⁰ It seems to me imperative that we should hold a full session of the Congress soon. We cannot pull up otherwise. Our committees have become stale and small groups fight for power and influence within them, forgetting the larger good. A full session of the Congress may awaken the organization.

17. For much the same reason I think that sooner we have general elections under the new Constitution for Parliament and the provincial legislatures, the better. I am very anxious that this should not be delayed. The earliest we can hold them is the end of this year or the beginning of the next. That should be the latest date also and I trust that every State will keep this in view. It would be exceedingly unfortunate if, for some reason or other, these elections have to be postponed even by a few months. We hope to appoint a Central Election Commissioner soon.

18. I am disturbed and distressed by the repeated firings that take place in various parts of India, sometimes inside prison and sometimes outside. I am not referring to what has been happening in Calcutta, because a serious situation arose there and it had to be controlled by all the means at our disposal in order to avoid any spreading of it. Elsewhere, many of these conflicts have been due to the set policy of the communists to create trouble by all means at their disposal. That challenge has to be met, wherever it is made. In meeting it, however, we have to take care that we do not play into the hands of those very communists who want to discredit our Governments. Apart from the communist, other cases have occurred of firing on the public. I can well believe that there was sufficient justification for these. Yet the fact remains that this kind of thing is creating a bad reputation for us and making our police force unpopular with the public. It would be a tragedy if the old feeling against the police was revived in the public. I should like you to give thought to this matter because I fear it is a growing danger. Perhaps you might consult your colleagues as well as your principal officers as to how best to deal with this situation. Law and order have to be maintained. But at the same time public opinion has to be satisfied and kept in harmony with Government. One suggestion I would like to make to you, and indeed I have made it previously, is that in every major case of firing there should be a proper enquiry other than

9. On 17 February 1950.

10. On 17 February, the All India Congress Committee amended the Congress constitution to disfranchise many members as part of an exercise to weed out corrupt elements from the Congress ranks and keep the party in touch with the masses. The question of revitalizing the Congress also figured prominently.

a departmental enquiry. That is a demand which is always made on behalf of the public and we have ourselves made it frequently in the past. It would be worthwhile to develop a convention to this effect, because then it will not mean selecting particular cases for an enquiry.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

X¹

New Delhi
1 March, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

We are passing through a difficult period when developments in Bengal, both East and West, overshadow other matters. Normally this is the budget period when both the Central Government and the States are busy with framing budget estimates. This business of the budget involves the consideration of high policies. This would thus be a fitting time for a review of our economic situation and a consideration of the way we are going. But all such matters have been rather pushed out of the public mind by events in Bengal.

2. A day or two ago I sent you a letter² drawing your attention to the next few critical days, because of Holi and the declaration of the Hindu Mahasabha to observe an East Bengal Day on the 5th of March. It is the height of unwisdom to have demonstrations at this stage about what is happening in East Bengal. But the Hindu Mahasabha has never been noted for its wisdom. It has a remarkable way of always saying and doing the wrong thing. That wrong thing is not noticed or it creates little effect in formal circumstances. But when people are excited and their minds are full of hatred and anger, then any lead from the Hindu Mahasabha may lead to mischief. There is plenty of inflammable material all round and a spark may set it alight. In West Bengal especially, deep passions have been aroused and it is much to the credit of the Government there, and more especially the Chief Minister, that the situation has been under control. We must remember however that no situation can long be controlled by police or military action unless there is a large body of public support. I think that there is some realization among thinking persons in West Bengal and elsewhere that we should function in a

1. File No. 25(6)-50-PMS.

2. See *ante*, pp. 77-79.

restrained way and not precipitate any action which might lead to grave consequences. But most people do not think or reason logically and are moved by the passion or prejudice of the moment. Some people go much further. They deliberately try to create trouble so as to bring about that very crisis that we try to avoid. I know that there are such groups. If the atmosphere is sympathetic to such groups, then Government machinery cannot do much. I would suggest to you therefore to be very vigilant during the next few weeks, and more especially during the next ten days or so, and not tolerate any action which might lead to communal trouble and conflict. Those who are taking a lead in exciting people should be definitely warned and checked. The newspapers, of course, have a vital role to play and it is desirable to keep in close touch with them and tell them what the position is.

3. We are now getting more accurate information about East Bengal. Our High Commissioner in Pakistan, as well as our Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca, have visited a number of places in East Bengal and their reports are coming in. From these reports, it might be said that events in East Bengal were bad and that these disturbances were of a widespread character. At the same time the figures we get are, on the whole, less than those previously received. There has been, as was natural, a good deal of exaggeration in the reports coming to us from private sources. It must be remembered that refugees flee from a situation which they consider as full of danger to them, and are not the best witnesses, even though some of them might have been eyewitnesses of a particular occurrence. They were and are much too excited and worked up to see an event in proper perspective and in any event they only see a small part of the picture.

4. The basic problem today is how to find full security for the minorities in East and West Bengal. I have no doubt that conditions in West Bengal for the minorities are far better than those in East Bengal. At the same time, it is idle to deny that Muslims in West Bengal or to some extent, elsewhere, have not that full sense of security that they should have. In the very nature of things, they are full of apprehension about their future. It is not much good giving them good advice or warning because we have to deal with an odd psychological situation. Even appeals for their loyalty, though desirable in themselves, have little meaning in this context. On the whole, the Muslims of India have behaved well. Some of them had behaved badly. But we must distinguish between the actual evil-doers and the majority of the Muslim population.

5. I have little doubt that we can control the situation in West Bengal, provided there is also some control in East Bengal. If East Bengal remains in a state of dangerous insecurity and incidents happen there, then there are bound to be repercussions in the West. The opposite of this is equally true. It is natural and right for us to exercise all the pressure we can on East Bengal or Pakistan. But, in the nature of things, this external pressure does not go very far, unless it takes the form of some kind of coercion, when it depends on a balance of various factors.

One thing, however, should be under our control, and that is, the situation in various parts of India. I am quite sure that if we can control this adequately, we shall not only get out of the vicious circle of retaliation on each other, but also powerfully affect the other side. At the same time, we shall be in a position to take any further step more effectively than otherwise.

6. We have had an exceedingly bad foreign press in regard to both Bengal and Kashmir. It is very unfortunate that this should be so and it may be that our publicity apparatus abroad is not good enough. But ultimately public opinion abroad is influenced far more by other factors, State policies, etc., as well as the despatches of foreign correspondents in India and Pakistan. Recent criticisms in the foreign press, notably in U.S.A.³ and the U.K.,⁴ have been grossly unfair to us both factually and otherwise. An attempt is made to put us in the wrong even in matters when to our minds, blame very largely attaches to the other party. That other party is, I regret to say, completely unscrupulous. They believe in piling up lie after lie after the Hitler fashion in the hope that some of these will certainly stick. I am afraid we are not angels and we make our mistakes also. But there is a major difference. The old policy of the Muslim League, which is being continued by the leaders of Pakistan, was one of deliberate fostering of hatred and the spirit of violence. Our leaders in the past followed an opposite policy, considering it both right and expedient. But some people imagine that in certain circumstances we should give up that policy and copy the methods of our opponents. I am quite sure that would be completely wrong and foolish, and yet there is a growing body of opinion in the country, and even within the Congress, which wants us to do that.⁵ I hope we shall be able to resist that. But inevitably our capacity for any other action weakens because of these diverse trends. We fail to some extent because we do not follow one clear policy.

7. If India is to progress, we must absorb, and make our own the various minorities in India, and notably the Muslims. The view of the Hindu Mahasabha and other communal organizations is opposed to this. I am certain that the Hindu Mahasabha policy is fatal for India. Their talk of putting an end to partition is foolish in the extreme. We cannot do so, and we should not try to do so. If by any chance partition was ended, while present passions last on either side, it would

3. For example, the *New York Times* on 6 February 1950; see *ante*, p. 202, fn 5.

4. The *Economist* of 18 February 1950 had blamed India for "obstructing the holding of an internationally supervised plebiscite" because India "really has no confidence that the vote could go in her favour."

5. At the A.I.C.C. session on 19 February 1950, several members from Assam, West Bengal and the Punjab demanded immediate and drastic action against Pakistan to save the minorities there.

mean tremendous new problems for us to face. We would be worse of than ever. Therefore, there must be no thought of putting an end of partition and having what is called Akhand Bharat.

8. There is a tendency among some of us to demand loyalty from the Muslims in India and to condemn tendencies amongst them which may be pro-Pakistani. Such tendencies, of course, are wrong and have to be condemned. But I think it is wrong to lay stress always on the loyalty on behalf of the Muslims of India. Loyalty is not produced to order or by fear. It comes as a natural growth from circumstances which make loyalty not only a sentiment which appeals to one but also profitable in the long run. We have to produce conditions which lead to this sentiment being produced. In any event, criticism and cavilling at minorities does not help.

9. Some people talk vaguely but nonetheless rather aggressively of war.⁶ I think it would be a disaster of the first magnitude for us to have war on something that necessarily takes the shape of a communal issue. War is disastrous in any event, but much more so when it is communal or racial or something like that. It is true that there are some things worse than war and there are occasions when there is no alternative left except war. It is also true that whether we want it or not, war may be thrust upon us, and so every prudent statesman will keep in readiness, and in full preparation, for every eventuality. But that does not mean talking and encouraging war sentiment.

10. East and West Bengal have innumerable personal contacts. Large numbers of people on one side have close relatives or friends on the other, and so if anything happens on one side, it brings a personal sorrow to the other, apart from other consequences. If a demand comes to us for protection, and more especially from women and children, who are in danger of death or worse, it is difficult and ultimately impossible to remain unaffected by it and not to do something to help. But to take rash action is no help and may even make the situation worse for them.

11. It is difficult to think of long-term policies when the situation is an ever-changing one. The only real long-term policy we can have is to consolidate India by making all the minorities in the country feel completely at home in the State, and indeed by removing all sense of difference from the political point of view between the so-called majorities and minorities. That will, no doubt, take some time. But that is the only goal to aim at and every step taken must keep that in view. An immediate short-term policy must lay stress on Governments on either side guaranteeing, insofar as they can, security for minorities. This means, in the present context, giving compensation to sufferers and rehabilitating those who

6. For example, J.B. Kripalani, in an article published in *Vigil* of 25 February, pleaded for India adopting a firmer attitude towards Pakistan if the communal situation in East Bengal was to be saved from further deterioration. He wrote: "A bully can least afford to drive things to a breaking point. But if it does, those who feel that they have right on their side must be prepared for war or martyrdom, but never for cowardly submission."

have been driven out of their houses during the recent disturbances. If they have migrated, they should be invited to go back to their homes. Where homes have been destroyed, Governments must help in providing new homes. It is essential also that the guilty should be punished and should be made to feel that it does not pay to create disturbance and to loot and kill. Abducted women must be our particular care and should be recovered. Forced conversions cannot be recognized. It may be that the Pakistan Government does not give full effect to this policy even though it might agree to it. What we should do in the circumstances will have to be considered step by step. In my correspondence with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, I have laid stress on this approach. While, in a general way, he has accepted some of these suggestions, I have had no proper answer from him yet.⁷

12. Looking further into this matter, it seems that if minorities are to remain and function where they are, they must be represented in Governments and elsewhere. It is wrong in every way for a large section of the population to feel that it has no voice in Government or in the Services. It was certainly a mistake in the Punjab to separate the Services communally after partition.

13. I shall be going to Calcutta in a few days' time.⁸ It is my intention to spend some considerable time in West Bengal and, if possible, to visit East Bengal also. I may not be able to remain there for long at one time, but I shall try to go there repeatedly, if necessary.⁹ I need hardly tell you that I attach the greatest importance to the solution of this Bengal problem and I am prepared to give as much time as possible to it.

14. The Kashmir issue is being argued in the Security Council, even though the Soviet representative has kept away from these meetings because of the China issue. This China representation in the Security Council has become farcical¹⁰

7. After reports of communal disturbances had reached India, Nehru suggested on 17 February 1950, that two Fact Finding Commissions should be constituted to survey the situation in both Bengals. On February 20 he repeated his suggestion. As the pressure for action to save the Hindu minority in East Bengal mounted, Nehru sent a third telegram to Liaquat Ali suggesting a joint tour of Bengal by the two Prime Ministers. Liaquat Ali turned down these two proposals, but recommended greater facilities to the two Deputy High Commissioners of India and Pakistan to undertake the proposed survey.

8. Nehru visited Calcutta on 6 March 1950 at the request of B.C. Roy and on 16 March visited the Ranaghat and Habra camps.

9. On 23 February, the Prime Minister of Pakistan rejected Nehru's suggestions as he felt that "it was not likely to produce the desired results."

10. The deadlock over Chinese representation in the Security Council had created a situation for which the Charter made no provision. The position was complicated further by the fact that Dr Tsiang, representing Nationalist China, happened to be in the chair that month and required therefore to give rulings on questions concerning himself. But Communist China had only been recognised by five out of eleven members of the Security Council and the United States, was not one of them. With five members still recognizing Nationalist China no motion for Dr Tsiang's expulsion could be carried by the necessary seven votes.

because the old Nationalist Government of China has been completely driven out of Continental China. The Soviet position in regard to this matter in the Security Council is logically correct and we have supported it by our vote. But other countries have preferred an illogical course for other reason, and hence the Security Council, and indeed the United Nations, have to face a deadlock from which it is not easy to find a way out. The whole future of the United Nations is imperilled by this question.

15. Some of the speeches delivered in the Security Council have been very much opposed to our point of view. In particular, the speech delivered by the U.K. representative there was offensive and had an element of threat in it.¹¹ It is astonishing that a deliberate attempt should be made not to face the real issues and try to bypass all the major points that we have raised. Our position has been made difficult by these deliberate attempts¹² on behalf of certain countries. Nevertheless, that position is quite clear in our minds. We cannot accept the McNaughton proposals in whatever shape they may come, and we shall then face consequences, if necessary. The resolution¹³ before the Security Council is not quite clear in regard to some matters and we have asked for elucidation.¹⁴

16. I am quite sure that the Kashmir matters, as well as other conflicts between us and Pakistan, would have been much nearer solution in a peaceful way if certain foreign powers had not continuously encouraged Pakistan in some of its wrong courses. The foreign press has also been unfavourable to us. Our foreign publicity machinery is unfortunately not very effective and should be remodelled. But the real causes are deeper and have something to do with world policies of various groups.

17. You will remember that in the President's speech on the opening day of Parliament, reference was made to a reduction of military expenditure. After careful thought we had come to the conclusion that every effort should be made to reduce

11. Alexander Cadogan said in the Security Council on 25 February 1950 that "if this Council is to function effectively now, and in the days to come, we must insist that its authority be not made to be disregarded or ignored."
12. During the Council debate, the delegates of most of the countries made it clear that their preference was for an action on the lines suggested in the McNaughton formula. The French delegate thought they were eminently reasonable; the American delegate found them to be fair and sound; the Cuban representative called them simple, reasonable, and practical; and the representative of Ecuador thought they were important and realistic.
13. On 24 February 1950, the representatives of Cuba, Norway, the United States and the United Kingdom recommended, through a draft resolution, that India and Pakistan, following General McNaughton's proposals, make immediate arrangements for demilitarization and agree to the appointment of an U.N. representative in whom the same powers as exercised earlier by the U.N. Commission would be vested and who would appoint a plebiscite administrator at an appropriate time.
14. India sought clarification on the questions of demilitarization, Pakistan's occupation of the northern areas of the state, and the choice of the mediator.

this expenditure. It is, in the long run, impossible for us to spend 50% of our Central budget on Defence. All progress is stopped by this top heavy expenditure. Recent events, however, have made it very difficult for us to make any substantial reduction, as we had hoped. Nevertheless, in the budget presented yesterday, there is some reduction. Last year's actuals were 170 crores for Defence. This year the figure is 168. This includes a new item of 8 crores for the State armies. If we exclude this, then the reduction of 10 crores is noticeable. Of course, as our Finance Minister pointed out,¹⁵ we have to keep vigilant and we shall have to spend more on Defence if necessity requires it. This reduction in the present year, in spite of our difficulties and crisis, shows how earnest we are in the matter of reduction of Defence expenditure.

18. I think you will agree with me that the budget statement presented by Dr Matthai last evening reveals a situation which is certainly not as bad as most people thought. Indeed, there are many pointers which indicate that we are on the upgrade. We are not out of the wood and we shall have to be very careful. The budget has been cautiously framed and does not represent any major new policy. But you will have observed that the Planning Commission has been announced, and in view of the importance of this Planning Commission I have consented to be the Chairman. The Commission is a strong one and we propose to give it the highest importance and status. It is for this Commission to take an overall view of the situation and help in framing policies and fixing targets. The Commission is not going to make just a theoretical approach to the problems that beset us, but will, I hope, lay down practical approaches and objectives. Probably there will be concentration on what can and should be done in the near future, apart from the larger plan.

19. The Commission may not formally begin its work for another few months because some of its members are at present carrying on other responsible duties. But even before it so begins functioning, preparation for its work will begin, and you may be addressed by it. It is obvious that no plan can succeed without the closest cooperation between the Centre and the states. Your Government's help, therefore, is essential. It may be desirable for you to appoint planning officers or boards in your state which would keep in contact and constant touch with the Central Planning Commission.

20. As you must know, the Congress Working Committee appointed a planning committee¹⁶ under the chairmanship of Shri Govind Ballabh Pant. It is hoped that there will be full contact and cooperation between the Planning Commission and this committee. We have to think not only of Government policies, but of how to bring in large masses of people to cooperate in furtherance of national policies

15. John Matthai in his speech on the budget on 27 February 1950.

16. The committee was appointed on 17 February 1950 to draw up immediately a short-term programme of work for one year which could later be a part of the five-year plan. The members were Govind Ballabh Pant, Jagjivan Ram, Gulzari Lal Nanda, N.G. Ranga and Shankarrao Deo.

of reconstruction and development. In this work the Congress organization can be of the utmost value.

21. The elections in the United Kingdom have resulted in a balance of parties which is unfortunate from the point of view of any stable policies being pursued.¹⁷ It is difficult to say how the situation will develop. These crises put democratic and parliamentary institutions to the test. The British have a powerful tradition in favour of these institutions and I am sure they will make good. The sympathies of a vast majority of people in India have all along been with the Labour Party in the United Kingdom. In regard to some matters we have differed greatly with them, but there has been a great deal of admiration in India for the brave way in which they have faced their domestic problems. In regard to foreign policies, and more particularly in regard to the U.K.'s policy about Kashmir, there has been a marked divergence between the Indian point of view and the U.K. Government's. Nevertheless, from the larger point of world peace and democratic and social progress, people in India certainly desired the success of the Labour Government. So far as India is concerned, there need be no apprehension that any party in the United Kingdom or any Government is going to interfere with us. We are an independent nation and we shall go our own way, as far as possible in cooperation with others. It is true that certain elements in the Conservative Party in England have been very anti-Indian in the past, and even in the recent past they have continued to do propaganda against us. But the time is past now when any Government in England can interfere or go back on anything that has been done. Indeed, Mr Winston Churchill and some of his colleagues assured me of this when I was in England last.

22. We have recently had the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal. Advantage was taken of this visit to discuss a Treaty of Friendship¹⁸ and a Trade Treaty.¹⁹ The treaty of friendship has been agreed upon subject to confirmation by the respective Governments. Probably there will be no difficulty about the trade treaty either. The treaty of friendship, of course, does not mean that we approve of the political or social structure of Nepal at the present moment. Unfortunately, this structure is completely feudal and backward and we have been laying the greatest stress during the past two or three years on substantial reforms being introduced. I regret to say that practically no results have been reached thus far in spite of

17. The Labour Party was returned with 315 seats against 297 seats for the Conservatives and supporters, 10 for the Liberals, and 2 for the Irish Nationalists.

18. According to the treaty signed in Kathmandu on 31 July 1950, both Governments agreed that there should be "everlasting peace and friendship" between the two countries. They also agreed to consult each other and devise effective counter-measures to meet any threat by a foreign aggressor.

19. This treaty of ten articles was aimed at "facilitating and furthering" trade and commerce between the two countries. It established Nepal's right to trade with third countries through Indian ports.

this pressure. We have pointed out to the Prime Minister of Nepal that in view of new developments in Asia, it is quite essential for a change in methods of governments. It is not our desire to interfere in Nepal in any way, but we cannot be unaffected by something that has its repercussions outside Nepal. Of course, for many years past, long before we took charge of the affairs of government, we sympathized with the reform movement in Nepal. We continue to do so because that is our general outlook and policy. As a Government, however, we are more concerned with reactions to events in Nepal. I am sure that if adequate steps in favour of reform are not taken in Nepal, there will be continuing trouble there and people will look elsewhere for help. That is bad for Nepal and for India.

23. We have no formal military commitments in regard to Nepal nor do we desire any. But it is perfectly clear that in the event of any aggressor attacking Nepal, we cannot remain indifferent. From that point of view, defence of Nepal becomes defence of India. I do not think it at all likely or even possible for such aggression to take place against Nepal and therefore I am not worried about it. But I wanted to make clear to you what our general policy is.

24. In regard to the French possessions in India, the matter drags on in a very unsatisfactory way. The referendum has been postponed and we have agreed to that because the conditions for a fair referendum have been lacking. In Goa, and in Portugal, some consternation was caused by my reply in Parliament that Goa must inevitably join India in the future.²⁰ The Portuguese Government still lives in some medieval age and appears to be ignorant of the changes that have taken place in the world. It is not our intention to solve the Goan problem by any aggressive methods. But our policy remains clear.

25. Shri Hriday Nath Kunzru has returned from South Africa after the preliminary conference. Something has been achieved at this conference insofar as a formula for the agenda of the round table conference has been agreed to. This is no great progress, but it is something achieved. Meanwhile, conditions in South Africa and in other parts of Africa become more and more difficult from the racial point of view. The Africans are no longer content to remain where they are and they demand privileges and equality of treatment. There have been racial riots recently.²¹ These were not primarily against Indians, though some Indian shops suffered. This question of Africa is perhaps the major question of the next generation. Our policy in Africa and elsewhere is a friendly one with the people there, i.e., the Africans. We have declared repeatedly that we do not wish to exploit them or come in the way of their progress in any way. On the whole, there has been improvement in Indo-

20. For example, *Dieiro da Manha*, the Portuguese Government's newspaper, criticizing Nehru's statement, wrote that "Portugal would not give up or rend any of her territory".

21. On 13 February 1950, widespread rioting broke out in the suburbs of Johannesburg, Cape Town and a western native township. Twelve Europeans and seven Africans were seriously wounded and a number of Indian shops burnt.

African relations, more especially in East Africa, where our representative²² has done good work in this respect.

26. At a recent meeting of our Cabinet, attention was drawn to the disabilities imposed on labour under certain provisions contained in the Maintenance of Public Order Acts in various States. The question arose while we were considering the Orissa Maintenance of Public Order Amendment Bill. I think it is very necessary that we should not mix up the labour question with other questions of public order. There has been much criticism in foreign countries about our policy generally in regard to public safety legislation. That legislation is unfortunately necessary because of violent anti-social elements in the country, both communist and communal. But we should try to separate labour from this as far as possible.

27. Certain restrictions on essential services were introduced during the War. Though conditions are far from normal even now in many respects, it cannot be said that war-time emergency still exists. We must, therefore, interfere as little as possible with terms and conditions of employment of workers and avoid curtailing vital trade union rights or rights of personal liberty. If there is such curtailment, the result is illegal strikes and an encouragement of defiance on the part of labour and disrespect for law. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 contains a number of legislative safeguards necessary to ensure that essential services function uninterruptedly. This should be enough.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. Apa B. Pant.

XI¹

New Delhi
19 March, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

There has been some delay in my sending you this letter because of my visit to Calcutta.¹ This was my second visit within a few days. This in itself will indicate to you how my mind is occupied by the grave situation that has arisen in Bengal. The present is serious enough, but the future consequences of what is happening today, or what might happen, are still more perilous.

2. It might be said that there has been no major incident in East or West Bengal during the last three weeks or so. Of course, we cannot be sure of what might

1. File No. 25(6)-50-PMS.

have happened or is happening in some remote village in East Bengal. I can only report from such information as we get from various sources. But I think that it would be true to say that no major incident has happened in either of the Bengals. Outside Bengal, however, there were repercussions in some towns of the U.P.² during the Holi period as well as Bombay and some other places³ in India. In Assam something big happened. The tribal people, incited, it is said, by some refugees, swooped down on the Muslim residents of part of Goalpara and Barpeta. There was very little, hardly any, killing. But there was a good deal of arson and a large number, probably 40,000 or more, of Muslims were driven out of their homes and pushed into East Pakistan. This has been a particularly deplorable occurrence. All these occurrences in various parts of India are the consequence of Bengal happenings which have filled people with anger.

3. Travelling conditions between East and West Bengal have become relatively easier, though they are still restricted and full of difficulties. This has resulted in a continuous stream of Hindu refugees from East Bengal into West Bengal. A considerable number of Muslims have also left Calcutta for East Bengal and some have gone to the U.P. and Bihar. This inflow and outflow continue and are likely to continue unless something else happens. It may be said that hardly a Hindu in East Bengal at present feels any sense of security and he is desirous of coming away. When we remember that the Hindus in East Bengal still number over 12 millions, the extent of the problem may be realized. It seems to me clear that it is impossible for us to go on receiving month after month, year after year, this enormous population, uprooted from their homes. On the other hand, it is equally clear that we cannot refuse entry to a person who looks to us for succour in his or her distress. If these great migrations continue, they will upset the whole social fabric of India, apart from putting an intolerable burden on us.

4. The only right way to solve this is to create conditions which give full security to the minorities to live in their homes wherever they might be. Assurances about this have frequently been given at Inter-Dominion Conferences and the like, and indeed the partition of India presumed such an assurance. Nevertheless, the Hindu minority has been progressively squeezed out of Pakistan. How then are we to meet this problem—not only the immediate problem of giving security but the more basic problem out of which this immediate problem has arisen? I think we are justified in thinking that this basic problem has arisen from that communal and narrow outlook which has led to the conception of an Islamic State in Pakistan. If that conception continues, its consequences also continue.

5. I am merely mentioning to you some of the important aspects of this very great problem. I shall not venture to suggest what we should do in the present to meet it, because any decision that we might take is a difficult one and we are

2. There were disturbances in Aligarh, Moradabad, Pilibhit and Bareilly.

3. At Katni and Kamptee in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra respectively.

giving it the fullest consideration. You must know that some of the remedies suggested are far-reaching and dangerous. Yet the mere fact that they have been suggested shows the deep-seated nature of the disease. Meanwhile, we have made some arrangements for the looking-after of the refugees that are coming from East Bengal. We have also strengthened our defences on the Bengal border.

6. Thinking of this Bengal problem, as well as all that has gone before it and might possibly follow after it, I am filled with deep distress and a sense of failure. All the ideals we have stood for in the past seem gradually to fade away and new urges and emotions fill the people. Circumstances drive us onward from one position to another, each further away from what we used to consider our anchor. We cannot run away from the task that history has set for us. But a cruel destiny seems to pursue us and nullify all our efforts.

7. The Security Council has passed a resolution on the Kashmir question.⁴ We have accepted this resolution. But, in doing so, we have made clear our position in regard to certain basic issues involved, and more particularly in regard to the disbandment of the 'Azad Kashmir' forces and the future of the northern areas.⁵ No mediator has yet been appointed. We made it clear that the mediator must be appointed with the consent of the parties.⁶

8. I should like to draw your special attention to the Government resolution⁷ about the Planning Commission which has been appointed under my chairmanship. This resolution indicates the wide scope of the Planning Commission's work. We are taking this Commission very seriously and we hope that it will help us in taking a balanced view of India's development and in devising means for rapid progress. The success of this Planning Commission depends very greatly on the cooperation it will receive from the State Governments. And so I hope that we may rely upon you for the fullest cooperation at all levels.

9. As I write this, the conference of Governors and Rajapramukhs is taking place here.⁸ This conference is of an informal type because decisions cannot be taken without full reference to the Chief Ministers. But it serves a useful purpose in giving us an overall view of what is happening in various parts of India. It becomes

4. The resolution introduced on 24 February 1950 was passed by the Security Council on 14 March 1950. See also *ante*, p. 44.

5. See *ante*, p. 192, footnote 11.

6. On 9 April 1950, the Government of India accepted the nomination of Sir Owen Dixon as mediator.

7. The resolution of 15 March 1950 stated that the Planning Commission would consider *de novo* the economic conditions of the country, draw up a new plan for development, fix priorities and stages of the plan, identify factors retarding economic development and suggest remedial measures, determine the infrastructure for the plan, appraise periodically the progress achieved and recommend necessary adjustments.

8. On 18 and 19 March 1950.

increasingly necessary for this full picture of India to be kept in view, not only for economic and planning purposes, but also in regard to many other matters.

10. This letter is a brief one. Perhaps I might write to you a longer letter later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

XII¹

New Delhi
1 April, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

It has been my custom to write to you about various developments in foreign and domestic affairs. I confess I find myself unable to say much about world affairs or even about many of our domestic affairs at the present moment. My mind is full of the major problem that confronts us today. It may be called the Bengal problem or the Indo-Pakistan problem. There is no doubt that this is the severest trial that we have had during the last two and a half years, ever since the Punjab tragedy.

2. I shall refer to two or three matters first before I deal with this major question. The Planning Commission has started its work and the first regular meeting took place on the 28th March. We are building great hopes on this Commission. We do not think of it as something to report after a while and then cease to be. It is a continuing Commission which will work from day to day and help us in building the new India. I earnestly trust that your Government will give it every cooperation. You will no doubt hear from it directly as to what they expect you to do in the matter.

3. An Election Commissioner has been appointed for India. He is Shri Sukumar Sen², who till recently was the Chief Secretary of the West Bengal Government. You were addressed some time ago about the next general elections and a variety of replies came to us about a suitable date. I am quite clear in my mind that we must have this election almost at all costs early next year. The latest date I can suggest is April 1951. Parliament, I hope, will pass legislation during the current session in regard to these general elections. I hope that your Government will speed up all the preliminaries of this election.

1. File No. 25(6)-50-PMS.

2. (1895-1963); joined I.C.S. 1922; Chief Secretary, West Bengal Government, 1947-50; Chief Election Commissioner, 1950-58; Chairman, Dandakaranya Development Authority, 1961-63.

4. We have had talks with representatives of Sikkim and I am glad to say that a satisfactory decision has been arrived at.³ Sikkim will continue to be a protected state of India, that is to say, it will have autonomy, but its defence, foreign affairs, etc., will be directly under the charge of the Government of India. In certain other matters too, the Government of India can interfere.⁴ The subsidy which we give to Sikkim is going to be increased.

5. I now come to the major problem to which I have referred above. You know that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is coming here on April 2nd for conversations on this subject.⁵ It is too optimistic to think that these conversations will result in a magical change of the situation. At the same time, there is no need to think that they must fail completely. The pressure of events is such that there is little room left for normal diplomatic talk. Cruel and stark facts stare us in the face and we have to come to grips with them. Every person of sense and goodwill will hope that something good will emerge out of these conversations. Even though they may not result in a sudden change, it will be something if they encouraged the forces which work for peace in this country and Pakistan.

6. If one reads the newspaper, or some of them, one would imagine that there are few people in the country who really seek peace. There has been an amazing amount of wild writing and hysterical speech. I have been surprised beyond measure at this wave of hysteria and lack of balance that has come over large numbers of our people. We used to blame Pakistan for its morbid mental state. We have little to choose now, so far as this state of mind is concerned, between India and Pakistan. Most of us are afflicted by it and very few can look at things in perspective or with some kind of a balance. People talk vaguely but excitedly of firm action, meaning thereby, presumably, war. Well, if war unhappily comes, we shall face it and we should be prepared for it. But hardly anyone realizes what war is and what it may mean to our country and to the world.

7. Wars come in this unhappy and distracted world and when they come, we have to accept the challenge. But it is not realized that modern war does not solve any problem. It only creates new problems which are much more difficult than the old ones. I have no doubt in my mind that war would be a tremendous catastrophe for all concerned and that we should try to avoid it to the best of our ability. Having said this, I have also to say that, in the circumstances of today, we have to be perfectly ready for it. We have, therefore, made certain fresh dispositions of our armed forces to meet any contingency that might arise. This

3. A provisional agreement was reached in New Delhi on 20 March 1950.

4. The press note issued by the Government of India on 20 March 1950 said that "as regards internal Government, the State will continue to enjoy autonomy subject to the ultimate responsibility of the Government of India for the maintenance of good administration and law and order."

5. Discussions between the two Prime Ministers in New Delhi from 2 to 7 April 1950 mainly concerned the treatment of minorities in the two countries.

is with no intention of provoking war or indulging in aggressive action. But the situation is too delicate for us to take risks or ignore possible developments which might imperil our national existence.

8. Newspapers in Pakistan write hysterically and give a completely one-sided and distorted picture. I regret to say that many newspapers in India are equally hysterical and also give a completely one-sided picture. And so it becomes difficult for the readers of these newspapers even to know the facts and consequently they cannot judge properly. All of us have a natural tendency to slur over our own errors and to look only to the errors of our opponents. Many evil deeds have been done in East Pakistan, as you well know, and vast numbers of people are moving from there to West Bengal and Assam. But we have to remember also that terrible deeds have been performed in West Bengal and Assam and vast numbers of Muslims are moving from West Bengal and Assam to East Pakistan. There is a considerable flow of Muslims from north and north-western U.P. also to Pakistan.

9. What does this show? Quite apart from the murder and arson and abductions, and forcible conversions and lootings, that have taken place in East Pakistan, and the murder and arson and looting that have taken place in West Bengal and some other parts of India, the major fact stands out that the Hindus of East Pakistan feel that it is not possible for them to stay there. They have no sense of security, much less of living their normal lives with opportunity to go ahead. The other major fact is that Muslims in West Bengal and, to some extent, in the northern and north-western parts of U.P. have also lost all sense of security. Pakistan, because of its basic policy, must be held to blame for much that has happened. But are we free from blame and can we excuse everything on the plea of inevitable reactions and repercussions? I cannot accept that argument. We have failed to preserve law and order and we have failed to give protection and a sense of security to large numbers of our Muslim nationals. Our failure may be explained, but, nonetheless, it is a failure which brings no credit to us.

10. We are passing through a major revolution in the minds of the people in India. That revolution started at the time of the partition or earlier and it has continued in various degrees. Now it has reached a new climax. The first thing for us to be clear about is our objective. Are we holding to our old objectives or do we wish to change them? Whatever we do, it should be done deliberately and after thought and not spasmodically and under stress of emotion. For my part, I hold to our old ideals and our old objectives. I hold to them because I think they are right as well as because I believe that any other line of action will bring ruin to our people. I am convinced that in the last analysis, it is the Gandhian approach to the communal problem that can solve it. That approach may be varied according to circumstances, but its basic principles have to be adhered to,

11. But there is little or none of this approach visible today. A great deal of excited criticism has been thrown at me, chiefly from the press in India or part of it. That criticism has led me to an even stronger belief that we must hold fast

to our anchor. If that anchor drifts away, then I have no particular objective to work or live for. Therefore, I propose to hold to that anchor, whatever my critics may feel or say. I can function in no other way.

12. If we look back during the past few years, it is extraordinary to realize how we have drifted away from our old moorings. Is this drift to continue? It is true that we cannot control Pakistan's policy, and yet we are affected by it powerfully. We cannot, for the moment, control many of our own people. But if we are swept away by what Pakistan does or by what some of our own people feel in the heat of the moment, then we prove ourselves little men whom the course of events will, no doubt, sweep away.

13. It is this basic problem that troubles my mind. Where do we look, what journey do we wish to undertake? Quite apart from peace and war, this matter must be cleared up. War is never an objective. It is only the means of obtaining an objective.

14. Apart from these major problems, we have to deal with the refugee problem in its new phase. We have taken the fullest responsibility for all refugees who may come from East Bengal. That is a tremendous task and yet a task which we could not possibly set aside. In dealing with this problem, the greatest cooperation of all the States in India is needed and I earnestly trust that your Government will give that cooperation.

15. Many people say that we should not have any talks with the representatives of Pakistan because our previous talks have failed and we cannot rely upon their assurances. If two independent States do not confer with each other, then the only other courses open are either war or international intervention. International intervention is not something that we can welcome or invite; war is something which has always to be avoided, if this is at all possible. It is to be avoided not just for idealistic reason, but because of hard practical facts. It is not clear to me how war will solve even the present problem. It is much more clear that it will give rise to further and even more difficult problems. But apart from this, a war may well lead to two major consequences—its development into world war and, secondly, social upsets on a huge scale in India and Pakistan. If this happens, the outcome of the war will see something entirely different from what we have envisaged, apart from the tremendous misery and destruction involved. War, therefore, should be the very last resort. It cannot be ruled out and therefore we must keep ready for it. But it must always be remembered that it is a counsel of despair and no hope or results can be expected from it.

16. What then remains? An attempt, however difficult, to approach the problem through negotiations. Behind the negotiations there will, no doubt, be all kinds of pressures, including ultimately the possibility of war. Negotiations cannot be just merely assurances. There must be some method of devising a machinery of implementation of those assurances.

17. Meanwhile, the exodus of vast numbers of people continues both from

Pakistan and India. It is likely to continue for sometime, whatever we might do. All that we can do is to create conditions which tend to lessen that exodus and ultimately stop it. Talk of wholesale exchanges of populations seems to me totally unrealistic. Yet, large-scale exchanges are taking place and it would be very unwise to try to stop this inflow or outflow. Therefore, while these migrations continue and are not stopped in any way, we try to create conditions which would ultimately prevent them.

18. There are at present a number of organization and some newspapers which are carrying on a deliberate policy of creating trouble so as to force the hands of Government into declaring war. We all know that there is a great deal of public feeling in this matter, but I do not believe that the great majority of our people want war. In any event, nothing could be more cowardly on our part than to submit to the clamour of some people and fashion our policy accordingly. We must work according to our own lights and try to convince the people of the rightness of our action. If they are not so convinced, they will have to choose others to control their destinies for the time being. The matter is too serious for prevarication. We cannot tolerate the activities of some of these organizations notably the Hindu Mahasabha and the like organizations, which are deliberately bent on mischief. They have thrown out a challenge to us and we have no alternative but to accept it with all that this implies. For my part, my mind is clear in this matter and, so long as I am Prime Minister, I shall not allow communalism to shape our policy, nor am I prepared to tolerate barbarous and uncivilized behaviour.

19. I suggest to you, therefore, that your Government should make its policy quite clear on these matters and your officers should have no doubt about it. I say so because I find that many of our officials are themselves not clear in their minds and are sometimes biased. Even our police force is not always impartial. In a crisis of this kind, half-hearted measures and half-hearted officials are of no use and they should be told so.

20. There is too often a tendency to wait for some incident to happen before action is taken. That is unwise and we have often to pay heavily for it. Therefore, if the policy is clear, it should be given effect to before incidents occur and before mischief-makers get busy. I have no doubt that we can control this situation, if we set about it. It is time we set about it in the fullest measure and without any prevarication. I think it would be a good thing if this was explained to officials of all grades. If any of them are not prepared to follow this policy honestly and effectively, then it is open to them to leave the service.

21. I write to you about the Bengal problem and its repercussions elsewhere. In considering it, however, we cannot forget the wider world context today. We appear to live in a disintegrating world and there is no near prospect of the forces of peace overcoming the tendencies of war. We have stood out as champions of peace in the world, and now today, we feel humiliated. How can we champion

LETTERS TO CHIEF MINISTERS

peace and freedom elsewhere, if we cannot maintain them in our own country?
How can we condemn communalism elsewhere, if we tolerate it in India?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

CONGRESS ORGANISATION

1. To Rajendra Prasad¹

New Delhi
8 December 1949

My dear Rajendra Babu,

Before you left Delhi I had occasion to have two talks with you about the general situation and about certain particular matters. As I look round the scene in India, I am alarmed and distressed at many developments that are taking place. I am not normally depressed for any length of time. But I cannot rid myself of the heavy responsibilities that fate and circumstance have thrust upon me. If anything goes wrong, in some measure at least, the responsibility for that must be borne by me as Prime Minister.

Of course, no individual can shoulder this responsibility by himself. During the past years this responsibility, so far as the Congress was concerned, was borne chiefly by limited number of persons. During Bapu's life, we all looked to him and if we could get his approval to any course of action, we felt assured and went ahead. Since his death, it has been much more difficult. But even so some of us, who form the old guard of the Congress, faced and shared this responsibility whatever the position or office we occupied. Practically speaking, and with no disrespect to others, the men who in practice shouldered this burden were yourself, Rajaji, Maulana and Vallabhbhai. We functioned in somewhat different spheres of activity and did not have the opportunity to consult each other as often as we used to, but whether we wanted or not, we could not get rid of this burden. It came to us partly from our assumption of office, but much more so from the position we had occupied for three decades in the Congress movement. So even if we resigned from any particular office, we could not escape from this responsibility. That was a charge laid down upon us by the whole course of India's development and struggle of the past generation. The memory of Bapu demanded that we should carry on this work to the best of our ability. The confidence of the people also made us the prisoner of our tasks. For whether we were criticized as a Government or in any other capacity or not, the fact is that the public generally have looked up to us, five persons, much more than to any one else in India.

What do we see around us now? I do not refer to the difficult economic situation that we have to face. That of course is important and urgent enough. But what distresses me even more is the cracking up, with great rapidity, of the noble structure that Bapu built. With all its failings, the Congress represented the spirit and mind

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol.8, pp. 219-223.

of India and I do not see anything else that can take its place without disrupting the country and bringing chaos and suffering.²

This Congress is simply fading away before our eyes. Even a fading might have been tolerated, but something worse is happening. There is no discipline left, no sense of common effort, no cooperation, no attempt at constructive effort (apart from a few), and our energies are concentrated on disruption and destruction.

I would not mind all this very much if I knew that some other fairly competent group could run the country for a while. It would do good to the Congress and to us individually to be free of the turmoils and responsibility of office and to devote ourselves to other kinds of work among the people. I am not afraid of losing the election. But I just do not see any other group which can run the country with even a moderate degree of success. The alternative to the Congress is thus nowhere to be seen, or at any rate any effective alternative. If the Congress goes out of the picture, the result is the growth of innumerable factions who fight each other regardless of the country's good. We shall then have separatism in every form, provincialism, communalism, apart from all kinds of splinter groups sailing under the name of socialism and communism. In addition to this, we shall have internal provincial conflicts which come in the way of every kind of effective work.

We all see what is happening in West Bengal and in East Punjab. That seems to me the precursor of what might happen in every part of India, with this difference that there will be no effective central authority, whether Government or Congress, to exercise any degree of control. Politically, economically and socially we shall just go to pieces. No doubt, some time or other India will pull herself together again. How long that process will take, no man knows and, meanwhile, there will be terrible suffering for our people and reaction in its worst form will triumph. That is not pretty to look at or think about.

Some of our elder colleagues in the Congress have become more bitter than even avowed enemies. I am told that some weeks ago a Sarvodaya Conference was held at Wardha and some of the speeches delivered there were bitter in the extreme. A week or so ago a meeting was held in Calcutta in the Indian Association room presumably to consider peasantry problems. J.C. Kumarappa presided and Profulla Ghosh and others of his group were present. Kumarappa and Profulla Ghosh delivered fiery speeches not only against the Central Government and the West Bengal Government but also calling upon the peasantry to follow the scorched-earth policy so as to prevent procurement of grain, the objective being just to create

2. Rajendra Prasad replied on 12 December 1949 that he agreed with Nehru's analysis of the existing situation. "It is really tragic that we should see the great institution which has been built up with the devoted service and sacrifice of so many of the best men and women of the country disintegrating before our eyes, and that so soon after the passing away of Bapu". He referred to the skin-deep attachment to the principles and suggested examination of the causes of the disintegration.

more trouble for the governments and bring them down. Do you remember what Bapu's views were when a scorched-earth policy was suggested by the then Government against a possible Japanese invasion? He was dead opposed to it even against an avowed enemy invading the country;³ and now our own colleagues propose to start this campaign because of their disgust with the present Governments. We can well imagine the consequences of such a policy and the terrible suffering that this will bring to the peasantry. And this policy is being recommended by a colleague of ours in the Working Committee and others who are considered as noted disciples of Bapu.

Prominent Karnataka Congress leaders have resigned on a linguistic province issue. Here again, a colleague of ours in the Working Committee is involved.⁴

In the United Provinces, Purushottamdas Tandon, who combines in himself the Speakership as well as the Presidentship of the Provincial Congress Committee, has started a new organisation of refugees to fight Government. He has invited members of the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. to join it. The other day he asked for a *hartal* in Lucknow. The local Congress asked the people not to observe a *hartal*. Is not all this quite fantastic and Gilbertian? Where is the Congress now? If a Government fails, it is a bad thing. But after all governments can be made and remade. But if the Congress goes to pieces, what takes its place? I just do not know what we are heading for.

I have put all this picture before you and I could dilate upon it. But you know the state of affairs in the country better than I do. I come back to what my individual duty is in the circumstances and what our corporate duty is—our meaning five of us, you, Rajaji, Vallabhbhai, Maulana, and myself. At least we should try to meet this situation, functioning together. We are few of us and a very great responsibility is cast upon us. I should have liked all five of us to meet not once but several times to discuss this situation in all its aspects and to come to some conclusion about it. Previously we used to do it in the Working Committee. But somehow the Working Committee functions differently now and spends all its time over some trivial details or other. Major questions, even the most important questions for it of the Congress organisation, are hardly considered. Even the constitution

3. Mahatma Gandhi, in an article in *Harijan* of 22 March 1942, wrote, "Can we contemplate with equanimity or feel the glow of bravery and sacrifice at the prospect of India's earth being scorched and everything destroyed in order that enemy's march may be hampered? I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence." Because he refused to regard anyone as an enemy, Mahatma Gandhi wanted the people to leave their homesteads and crops without destroying them. Military requirements, he thought, should not supersede national or humanitarian considerations.

4. S. Nijalingappa.

of the Working Committee at present does not help an intimate discussion. Meanwhile, the sands of time run out and we go merrily forward to whatever catastrophe or disorder may lie in wait for us.

This afternoon, Vallabhbhai, Maulana and I sat for some time discussing these problems. Naturally we could not produce any magic solution or brilliant suggestion. But if a problem is not tackled, it tries to solve itself in its own peculiar way which may not be at all happy. So I suppose things are moving in India to some kind of a climax while people's minds are engrossed in petty quarrels and minor objectives.

The major question before us I think is the future of the Congress. We have to be clear in our own minds about it and to throw all our weight in the direction that we consider right. We have allowed this drift to continue too long and perhaps it is already too late to do anything. Still we must do our best. That involves not only the whole state of the Congress organisation (or disorganisation) today but also the question of the next Congress President and the next Working Committee. These are important matters for much depends upon them.

I mentioned to you when you were here the probability of our having a planning committee or commission of a high order. I shall not repeat what I said about it then. You told me that you did not feel that you could take charge of any such commission. I accept your decision about it if you feel that way.

Then comes the question of the President of the Republic. Obviously this has to be decided fairly soon. It is inconceivable that we should go to contested election on the very eve of the change-over. Even the timing is such that this cannot be done in that way. But apart from the timing it would be an unseemly sight for the country and for the Congress for two of our most eminent leaders to contest against each other. That, we are agreed, cannot happen. If that is so, then a clear decision must be arrived at long before the actual formal election, a decision not only in our minds but something that can be made public to avoid unseemly controversy and argument which would shatter the remaining edifice of the Congress. What then can we do? It is patent that there are only two persons who might be chosen as President of the Republic—yourself and Rajaji. There is no other. These two have all along belonged to that inner group of the Congress consisting of just a very few. One of these two should, it seems to me, take the initiative in declaring that he will not stand for the Presidentship. That is the only way of avoiding a last-minute contest and ill effects on the public mind. Thus the only course open is either for Rajaji to make such a declaration or for you to make it.⁵

5. In his reply Rajendra Prasad further told Nehru that a withdrawal by him would be interpreted as "dictation" and a "betrayal" of the members of the Constituent Assembly who had insisted on his accepting the Presidentship of the Republic. However, he left the matter to Nehru, Patel and Azad to decide.

Two days ago I happened to see Rajaji about another matter. He told me that he felt very embarrassed. He himself was anxious to retire to his village and the only consideration for him was whether his colleagues and his duty demanded something else. In any event, he said that this matter must be decided in consultation with his colleagues before many days were over. He would gladly issue a statement about retiring himself, if his colleagues so desired. Thus an element of urgency comes into this matter and indeed the time element itself brings urgency. I should be very grateful if you could advise me in this matter. I am writing to you after consulting Vallabhbhai and Maulana. Naturally I have not told Rajaji about this. Nor indeed have I discussed the matter at all fully with him. When he mentioned it, I merely said that I agreed with him that a decision should be made fairly soon.

You and I and Vallabhbhai have had some talks about this. It is not necessary to repeat them and to cover same ground. I think, on the whole, we know each other's mind. The time has come for a decision and so I am taking the liberty of writing this long letter to you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. To B.C. Roy¹

New Delhi
December 25, 1949

My dear Bidhan,

I received your letter of the 17th December² a few days ago. The matters raised therein are of great importance and I have consulted my colleagues and given a great deal of thought to them.

When I went to Calcutta, I formed the impression that the basic way of dealing with the Calcutta and the Bengal situation was more psychological than political.³ Of course we had to deal with the law and order situation, as well as the political situation. But fundamentally there was a tremendous ferment in peoples' minds,

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Roy had expressed his feeling that the time was not opportune for general elections in West Bengal. He stated that the Bengal situation required economic rather than political remedies.

3. Nehru visited Calcutta from 12 to 14 July 1949 to bring about rapprochement between the two factions in the Provincial Congress and to find out the causes for the defeat of the Congress in the recent South Calcutta by-election.

a great deal of dissatisfaction with Government, both Central and Provincial, and a tremendous feeling of frustration. I have still a good sense of how the public mind functions. I made myself receptive in Calcutta and came back with this firm conviction that something must be done to meet this terrible state of frustration and discontent. I spoke to the people there also quite frankly and told them of my reactions. I recommended to the Working Committee on my return two courses of action:

- (i) elections for the West Bengal Assembly within six months or so; and
- (ii) certain political changes both in the Cabinet and in the Bengal P.C.C.

I attached importance to both these approaches, but more particularly to the elections. We realised perfectly the difficulties in the way of elections. I discussed this matter with your colleagues in the Bengal Cabinet as well as with others who might be said to be opposing them in various ways. I discussed it also with many odd individuals who are not politicians as such. Nearly all of them pointed out difficulties but on the whole agreed with my analysis. That analysis had led me to the conclusion that when there is this feeling of frustration, the burden of decision should be left to the people themselves. Any governmental decision, however good, appears to be an imposed decision and does not remove that sense of frustration. The remedy of an election was, in the circumstances, not only an inconvenient one but rather heroic one and the consequences were not easily predictable. But the disease was deep-seated and any patchwork remedy appeared to me little good.

Bengal, as we know, has had to put up with very grave difficulties during the past two years and a half or more and has more specially suffered from partition and its consequences. Bengal, in a sense, is symptomatic of India as a whole in this respect as in some others, only Bengal exhibits these symptoms in an extreme form than the rest of India. Bengal therefore is a warning to pull ourselves up and understand the deep-seated causes of our malaise. I feel strongly that we must tackle this position at the root and not play about with certain external manifestations of it. The root is varied and it is not easy to get hold of it. One aspect of it was touched by me when I suggested elections.

I am convinced more than ever that we shall never get going in this country properly by purely governmental measures without the fullest cooperation of the public. It is not good enough to work for the people, the only way is to work with the people and go ahead, and to give them a sense of working for themselves. There has been a tendency all over India for us to work more and more governmentally and less and less with the people. Even the Congress has stopped functioning with the people and is largely concerned with cliques holding some kind of authority and looking forward to winning elections and maintaining their positions. The old idealism and close contact with the masses has largely gone. It is not surprising therefore that the people should seek other ways and if they do not find them readily

they are frustrated and cast the blame on governments. Unless we find some way of roping in the people in national work and coordinating government activities to that end, the situation will grow progressively worse. No amount of governmental action including even projects and schemes for the benefit of the people, will take us far without that active public cooperation and support.

When I was in Calcutta I appealed for this public cooperation and support and I think I created some impression. For some time after my visit there was an improvement in the law and order situation, partly at least due to public support.

I cannot get rid of this idea that we have lost touch with the people and we function more and more in narrow grooves, influenced by this particular interest or that and thinking more of political groupings and specialised economic interests than of this fundamental approach to the public mind. This seems to me most evident in Bengal. West Bengal ministers almost appear to have given up the city of Calcutta from the point of view of approach to the people. I believe they rely to some extent on the mofussil areas. I think that it is dangerous from every point of view to ignore the great city of Calcutta. That is a powerful nerve-centre not only of the province but of India.

Coming back specially to my recommendations to the Working Committee during the last summer we came to final decisions in Working Committee after consulting many Ministers of your Cabinet as well as others of your Assembly Party who represented a different grouping. It is perfectly true that none of them was enthusiastic about a general election six months later. At the same time, the logic of events forced them to the conclusion that an election was desirable.

In regard to the other matter of certain political changes in the Cabinet and the Congress Committee, the logic was also clear enough, but to our misfortune even the very grave situation in Calcutta and Bengal did not help in bringing closer to each other the two rival groups.⁴ It is true that so far as the Assembly Party was concerned, there was a considerable majority supporting the present set up. But Assembly parties by themselves are not very important unless they have large sections of the public behind them. It is clear to me that the public generally had a sense of being fed up with things as they were and with both groups of the Congress. If this was allowed to continue, Congress in Bengal would simply fade away and others would come into the field. I do not mind others coming in provided they have a certain competence and ability to carry on. I saw no such competence and therefore the result might well be a cracking up of the whole system a little later with no group strong enough to hold the reins effectively. Hence the extreme

4. The Hooghly group led by Atulya Ghosh, which was supporting the Roy Government, refused to accept the proposal of the Congress Working Committee on the ground that an interim election would lead to undesirable consequences because West Bengal was still passing through social and economic problems created by the partition of 1947. The Gandhian and the Jugantar groups welcomed the proposal in the hope of dislodging the Roy Ministry.

necessity of Congressmen patching up their differences to some extent and trying to pull together. Unfortunately that did not happen and does not seem likely to happen. Indeed conditions appear to be worse than they were. You have yourself pointed out what some people like J.C. Kumarappa and Profulla Ghosh are saying and doing in regard to procurement of rice. I entirely agree with you that it is deplorable and scandalous that any person with the least sense and patriotism should behave in this irresponsible way. But the fact remains that conditions are inducing people to behave in this way and we have to get a grip of these conditions rather than merely express our disapproval of individuals.

Anyhow that attempt to make the Congress function coherently and together in Bengal has failed and we shall have to suffer the consequences.

So far as the elections were concerned, right from the beginning, we tried our best to expedite them. Even after my return from America, the Working Committee laid stress on these elections. We realised completely the difficulties in the way. But we felt at the same time that not to have these elections, after all that had been said about them, would be a tactical blunder and would put an end to the Congress influence and to the governmental position in Bengal. No doubt you can carry on for many months. But the end would be the same. Our opponents would charge us with breach of faith and with trickery. There was no breach on our part or trickery and we were in deadly earnest when we talked about these elections, and yet here we are, six months after the decision, still wondering what to do. It is little good to cast blame on any one for this and perhaps events and circumstances were too powerful for us. But I think we have also been very slow about this business and people may legitimately say that we have acted in a way to avoid elections. That is a charge which it is not easy to answer.

So here we are in a fix. We do feel still that taking it all in all, elections would be desirable, provided they can be held. Your letter gives a large number of reasons why it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold these elections before the monsoon sets in. During the monsoon it is practically impossible to hold them. After the monsoon it would be manifestly absurd, because we would be too near the General Elections.

Then there is the criticism made by many of our opponents about these elections on a restricted franchise. Nobody wanted election on a restricted franchise but this was the only way to have early elections.

Another factor to be borne in mind now is the economic conflict that has arisen between India and Pakistan. This will affect West and East Pakistan more particularly and we do not know what the consequences might be.

It seems to me that the decision must rest with representatives of the people of Bengal. We do not wish to go back on our undertaking to them. If representatives of various schools of thought consider this matter in all its aspects and come to a decision, we shall abide by that decision. When I say representatives, I do not refer only to the present Government or the present Assembly. I include others also who are at present opposing us. Of course such a decision can hardly be taken

by votes of a majority of people consulted. It must represent some kind of a consensus of opinion.

I am suggesting therefore to the Governor, Dr Katju, to consult various leaders of groups and to report to us about their views on this subject. Naturally, he will consult you and your Government fully as well as representatives of the minority groups in the Assembly. This would include the minority Congress group in the Assembly as well as non-Congress people. It should include Sarat Bose and any others either in the Assembly or outside whom you or the Governor think fit to consult.⁵

Such a consultation can take place jointly or separately or both as is considered suitable. The Governor can then report to us about these consultations and as to where the balance of opinion lay.

I see no other way of dealing with this situation and the sooner we deal with it the better, because delay itself is harmful and comes in the way of all work.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Governor. I suggest that you place this letter before your colleagues in your Cabinet also.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. The decision to hold a general election in West Bengal had to be reversed by the Congress Working Committee on the basis of a report from the Governor of the province, K.N. Katju, who had consulted all sections of public opinion. He had recommended the postponement of interim elections and holding of general elections along with other States scheduled for 1951.

3. Congress the Greatest Unifying Force¹

...I disagree with the view that with the realisation of freedom, the Congress has fulfilled its purpose and should be wound up. The Congress is the greatest unifying force in the country today. If it is removed from the scene, the country will disintegrate into petty factions.

I exhort every Congressman to strengthen the organisation and never to do anything that will weaken it. I know that some weaknesses have crept into the

1. Address to Congress workers, Nagpur, 1 January 1950. From *The Hindu*, 4 January and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3 January 1950. Extracts.

Congress and that since the achievement of freedom, Congressmen have been feeling that their duty is done. It is because of this attitude that their minds are full of bickerings, complaints and even frustration.

I must warn them that they are drawing upon the old reservoir of goodwill and popularity of Congress without doing anything to add to this shrinking reservoir. If we do not fill this reservoir by our work and service, it will dry up before long, which will mean liquidation of the Congress and of all Congressmen, including you and me.

Another reason why the Congress should continue to function is that the Government cannot achieve much unless the people cooperated, and the Congress alone can create enthusiasm among the people to cooperate. The people still love the Congress and there are men at the top in the Centre and in the provinces whose personal prestige is high. But this is not a very strong foundation to build our future on, and we must always try to reinforce its strength. India today faces great opportunities. But if we do not work hard and remove our weaknesses, I may say that you may not only fare badly in the elections, but you may even darken the whole future of the country. We must therefore bend your energies to hard work.

The coming 15 months are of utmost significance in deciding the future of this organisation. I have no doubt whatsoever that the resignation of the Cabinet will enhance the prestige of the Congress but there is no other worthy organisation to replace it. It is the duty of the Congress, however, to discharge the heavy responsibilities thrust upon it by the force of circumstances to the fullest extent.

I discover that the secret of life lies in doing work, which must be executed with some definite aim. Work is the only solution for the prosperity of our country. There are many constructive works of village uplift, for example, for which the people need not seek the help of the Government, but which will have to be done through the process of self-help.

I refer to the relations between the Ministry and the P.C.C. It will be accepted at once as a matter of principle that there ought to be full cooperation between the two. There is nothing new in it although I too am receiving complaints from different provinces in this regard. I support the contention that as far as practicable the Government should consult the Congress organisation. Constant criticism and complaints, cracking of jokes and the throwing of brickbats at the Government will result in the Government's ultimate resignation here causing harm to none else but the Congress organisation.

So far as the increased burden of taxation is concerned, the Government has several development schemes, the fulfilment of which requires crores of rupees. I do not relish the idea of borrowing funds from foreign countries. Indian capitalists have refused to lend money. In these circumstances, the only course open to the Government is to recover the amount from the people in the form of taxation for their own good...

4. To Rafi Ahmed Kidwai¹

New Delhi
February 14, 1950

My dear Rafi,

I have your letter of today's date.

I had a frank talk with Triloki Singh² yesterday and he agreed with certain suggestions that I have made. When I learnt that he has changed his mind subsequently, I was distressed and somewhat annoyed. Naturally there was not much room left for me to discuss the matter again with him, as he knew what my views were.³

I do not wish him to be over-awed by my personality. But it is not possible for me to throw about my advice to people who do not value it. I had tried to help him to the best of my ability and to clear up certain matters that came in the way. It is obvious that my line of approach does not appeal to him and his colleagues. Perhaps if they had followed this line previously, much subsequent troubles might have been avoided.

I have been wanting to meet you for the last few days, but have been heavily occupied. I had hoped to see you this evening, but then you were not free. I should like to have a talk with you, not so much about this matter of Triloki Singh, but about certain broader issues affecting our province and the country. It is a matter of grief to me that we have sunk so low in our province and that every question is viewed from the narrowest party angle. I am unable to appreciate this, as I am not constituted that way. Hence my difficulty in offering advice except from an entirely different approach.

For many months past there is constant talk publicly and the press is full of it, that there is a conflict and tug-of-war between Pantji and you in the affairs of the U.P.⁴ No doubt this is much exaggerated. But also no doubt that there is that

1. J.N. Collection.
2. (1908-1980); member, U.P. Legislative Assembly, 1946-52, 1957-62 and Leader of the Opposition therein, 1950-52, 1957-62; member, Rajya Sabha, 1967-68, 1970-80; member, Jan Congress, 1950-51, and later of Praja Socialist Party, 1952-68.
3. Rafi's group in the U.P. legislature was charged with indiscipline for giving publicity to serious charges of corruption and nepotism against the U.P. Ministry. Its leaders were expelled from the Congress Party in the legislature. The group left the Congress benches and sat with the opposition. It was asked by the A.I.C.C. to return and sit on the Congress side. On Rafi's advice the group continued to sit in opposition. Nehru tried to intervene and after consultations with the leader of the group, Triloki Singh, made out a draft which he thought would make the Working Committee rescind the order of expulsion. Rafi's major alterations in the draft annoyed Nehru and he withdrew from mediation.
4. Many of Rafi's faithful followers had left the Congress and formed the People's Congress and sat in opposition both in the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council at Lucknow while Rafi was a member of the Congress Ministry at the Centre.

conflict. In any event, the mere fact that this is generally believed is itself significant and important and has consequences. A conflict on party lines between two or more groups in a province is bad enough. But a conflict of this kind when one of the important parties to it is functioning in another sphere and a higher one at the Centre, is far worse. It becomes exceedingly difficult then to bring about any real compromise or *modus vivendi*. It is an embarrassing position for all concerned. I am afraid you have allowed yourself to be associated far too much with these party squabbles in the U.P. and permitted a group to look to you for advice and guidance. In the circumstances, naturally whatever that group does is attributed to you, whether that is a fact or not. Evil consequences flow from this belief.

Individuals are important, but we cannot think in terms of individuals or groups, when the major issue is good of the country or a province. I have tried my utmost to consider this and other questions from this larger viewpoint, with what success I do not know. So far as the U.P. is concerned, I do not wish to interfere till I feel that I can make a difference. I am not going to waste my energy in futile talks. If I feel that the time has come to do something which will make a difference, I shall certainly act.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

5. To N.G. Ranga¹

New Delhi
March 23, 1950

My dear Ranga,

Your letter. I think you have completely misunderstood me. I never challenged the joint responsibility of Cabinet. I was referring to major matters of policy for which our Party stands.² Among them being our attitude to communalism. What I said was that in a major matter of policy, for which the Prime Minister is specially responsible, if the Prime Minister's views are not accepted, then he has to go and somebody else must take his place.

You must remember the background to which reference was made at the meeting. Whispering campaigns and attempts to run down the Prime Minister have been going on for sometime.³ It is not possible for me or anyone in my position

1. N.G. Ranga Papers, N.M.M.L.

2. See *post*, pp. 458-459.

3. See *ante*, pp. 147-148.

to carry on in this way. I think I am democratic enough, both in regard to the Cabinet and in regard to the Party, and I hope, the country. But what is happening is that almost everything that we stood for in the past is gradually being lost sight of and people are advocating policies in direct opposition to Congress policies. If I stand up for Congress policy, so-called whispering campaigns are set afoot. Obviously when a crisis arises, it is most important that a decision should carry with it the largest amount of consent and approval and should be in conformity with our major policies. We have reached a time when these major policies themselves are apparently in dispute. I think we should clear that up.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7

AYODHYA

1. Telegram to G.B. Pant¹

I am disturbed at developments at Ayodhya.² Earnestly hope you will personally interest yourself in this matter. Dangerous example being set there which will have bad consequences.

1. New Delhi, 26 December 1949. J.N. Collection.
2. On the night of 21-22 December 1949, images of Ram and other Hindu deities were surreptitiously installed in the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya in the Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh. It was claimed that the mosque had been built in the sixteenth century after destroying a Hindu temple standing on the site and that this temple had been at the birthplace of Ram. The Government declared the premises as a disputed area and locked the gates.

2. To C. Rajagopalachari¹

New Delhi
7 January 1950

My dear Rajaji,

I wrote to Pantji last night about Ayodhya and sent this letter² with a person who was going to Lucknow. Pantji telephoned to me later. He said he was very worried and he was personally looking into this matter. He intended taking action, but he wanted to get some well known Hindus to explain the situation³ to people in Ayodhya first. I told him on the telephone of your letter to me, which you sent this morning.

Vallabhbhai is going to Lucknow day after tomorrow at Pantji's request. This is in connection with the elections to Parliament.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. File No.2(507)/49-PMS.
2. Letter not available.
3. A legal suit was filed on 16 January 1950 in the court of the Civil Judge, Faizabad.

3. To G.B. Pant¹

New Delhi
February 5, 1950

My dear Pantji,

I shall be glad if you will keep me informed of the Ayodhya situation. As you know, I attached great importance to it and to its repercussions on all-India affairs and more especially Kashmir. I suggested to you when you were here last that, if necessary, I would go to Ayodhya. If you think this should be done, I shall try to find the date, although I am terribly busy.²

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No.2 (507)/49-PMS.
2. Pant replied on 9 February 1950 that there had been no marked change in the Ayodhya situation. He wrote that Muslims wanted to move the High Court for the transfer of the case from the district. Local officials were transferred. About Nehru's visit to Ayodhya he wrote, "I would have myself requested you to visit Ayodhya if the time were ripe."

4. To K.G. Mashruwala¹

New Delhi
March 5, 1950

My dear Kishorilal Bhai,

Thank you for your letter of March 4th. I am replying to you briefly. Tomorrow morning I am going to Calcutta.

I entirely agree with you that the Indian press has not been free from blame. I referred to a particular period when relatively it behaved better. Since then it has gone down somewhat in this respect, though the Pakistan press is far worse. The West Bengal Government has succeeded in preventing the Calcutta press to some extent from going to extremes. But there is so much excitement in Calcutta that it has become very difficult to exercise restraint. War is openly advocated and the kind of posters that are put up in Calcutta are very bad.

There is no doubt that while the treatment given to Hindus in East Bengal has been exceedingly bad, Muslims in Calcutta have also been in a state of terror,

1. J.N. Collection.

although they have lost few lives. There is a large stream of peoples from East Bengal coming over to West Bengal and a somewhat smaller stream of Muslims from West Bengal and Assam going to East Bengal.

You refer to the Ayodhya mosque. This event occurred two or three months ago and I have been very gravely perturbed over it. The U.P. Government put up a brave show, but actually did little. Their District Officer in Fyzabad² rather misbehaved and took no steps to prevent this happening.³ It is not true that Baba Raghavdas⁴ instigated this, but it is true that after it was done, he gave his approval to it. So also some other Congressmen in the U.P. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant condemned the act on several occasions, but refrained from taking definite action probably for fear of a big scale riot. I have been greatly distressed about it and have repeatedly drawn Pantji's attention to it.

I am quite convinced that if we on our side behaved properly, it would be far easier to deal with Pakistan. Today many Congressmen have become communal insofar as Pakistan is concerned and this reacts on their behaviour towards Muslims in India. I just do not know what we can do to create a better atmosphere in the country. Merely to preach goodwill irritates people when they are excited. Bapu might have done it, but we are too small for this kind of thing.

I am afraid, in the prevailing atmosphere, there is no chance of Bapu's peaceful march of strikers being copied in Bengal.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. K.K.K. Nayar (b. 1907); joined I.C.S., 1930; served in the United Provinces in various capacities; District Magistrate, Faizabad, at this time.
3. Nayar refused to carry out the instructions of the Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police for the removal of the idols. "I cannot in my discretion... enforce such a solution as I am fully aware of the widespread suffering which it will entail to many innocent lives." Nayar was replaced eventually.
4. Raghavendra Sheshappa Fachapurkar alias Baba Raghavdas (1896-1958); joined Indian National Congress in 1920, made his headquarters in Gorakhpur and worked for the political, moral, social and educational uplift of the people; elected to U.P. Vidhan Sabha in 1946; advocated nationalism, adoption of Hindi as national language, social reforms, communal unity, equality of all castes; started Gita Press; was also associated with Bhoodan and Khadi work.

ADMINISTRATION

1. To Gopichand Bhargava¹

New Delhi
November 19, 1949

My dear Gopichandji,²

I have your letter about the Bhakra Dam. I have been deeply interested in these river valley schemes, and more especially the Bhakra Dam. I am distressed to learn that anything should come in the way of this great scheme. I shall speak about it to our Finance Minister. But conditions being what they are, I can hardly go beyond exercising some gentle pressure. The final decision must remain with those in charge of our finances.³

I must confess to you that I have lost heart completely so far as the affairs of the Punjab are concerned. My ideas of propriety have been offended repeatedly there and I fear that there is going to be little or no stability in the province. You will remember that I laid great stress on this stability and continuity, when I was there. Evidently my advice was considered of little value. I regret that the Central Government or the Congress Working Committee or the Parliamentary Board should have got involved in this sorry affair which does little credit to anybody. In view of this, I cannot grow enthusiastic about anything in the Punjab. People there appear to think more of personal rivalries than of more important issues...

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Chief Minister of East Punjab.
3. In a note (not printed) to the Ministry of Finance on 21 December 1949, Nehru discussed the financing of the Damodar Valley, the Bhakra and the Hirakud projects. He suggested that final decisions should be taken by the Cabinet on the recommendations of the Economic Committee, which had referred the matter to a sub-committee.

2. To Sri Prakasa¹

New Delhi
26 December 1949

My dear Prakasa,

...This is just a brief letter to acknowledge your letter of the 17th about Cooch Behar. I agree with much that you say. But the States Ministry is an *imperium*

1. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

in imperio and we get to know things after they are pretty well advanced. I only heard of this development at a very late stage and I did not wish to interfere with it then...²

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Nehru had given an assurance at a Calcutta meeting (see *Selected Works*, Second Series, Vol. 12, p. 236) that the question of the merger of Cooch Behar would be decided according to the wishes of the people, but the Ministry of States decided to merge it with West Bengal. The Assam Congress Parliamentary Party and the Assam Provincial Congress Committee in protest urged the Government of India to stay the merger and decide the issue by a plebiscite.

3. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
27 December 1949

My dear Vallabhbhai,

You will remember that at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee, the member from Assam mentioned the proposed merger of Cooch Behar with West Bengal.² He was much agitated about it. I was a little surprised to learn of this merger and I do not know what the facts were. I had seen it vaguely referred to in some newspapers. But I thought all this was speculation. Now I have received letters from Dr Roy expressing his gratification at it³ and letters from Assam, both from the Governor and the Premier, expressing their great dismay.

Perhaps the decision to merge it with Bengal might be the right one. But I am rather disturbed by two facts. One is a personal one. I gave certain assurances in

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Since 12 September 1949, Cooch Behar had been a centrally administered area, but the Government of India announced on 29 December 1949 that the best interests of Cooch Behar would be served by its integration with West Bengal. Thus Cooch Behar was merged with West Bengal on 1 January 1950 adding 1918 square miles of territory and a population of eight lakhs. B.C. Roy announced that it would be maintained as a separate district with headquarters at Cooch Behar for historical and sentimental reasons. Representation would be given in the provincial assembly on the basis of population and all state servants would be absorbed in West Bengal Government services.

3. On 8 December 1949, B.C. Roy wrote to Nehru thanking him and his Cabinet colleagues for agreeing to merge Cooch Behar with West Bengal. He wrote: "It is not merely a physical accretion to this Province for which I express my thanks but it is also a matter of psychology."

public and in private in Calcutta and elsewhere that there would be no merger of Cooch Behar without reference to the wishes of the people of Cooch Behar. Secondly, in a vital matter of this kind decisions are taken without any reference to the Cabinet or even information to me. I read about it in the newspapers.

We have been careful to avoid a redistribution of provincial boundaries because we felt this will give rise to a great deal of trouble. A question like Cooch Behar being added on to Bengal or Assam is of a like nature and creates the same provincial passions. It may be that, in all the circumstances, the weight was in favour of Bengal. But the matter is a difficult and delicate one and it might have been advisable to consider it more fully in consultation with others.

Day before yesterday Pantji came here for a short while. He came to my house after being with you. I asked him why he had come. He said that he had been asked to attend a meeting to consider the future of Vindhya Pradesh.⁴ I was rather taken aback, as I did not know that this question was being considered. Obviously this question is also a highly complicated one and has to be dealt with care. Our general principle is that the people concerned should be consulted. This consultation is hardly enough if a few persons are consulted. There is no doubt that there is fairly strong feeling in Vindhya Pradesh either way. I am not in the least interested where a particular part of India goes and to which province it is attached. But I would not like anything done which appears to go against the wishes of large numbers of people and which creates an impression that decisions are imposed without proper consultation. I hope, therefore, that the question of the future of Vindhya Pradesh will be fully considered, before any decision is taken.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

4. On 29 December 1949, the Government announced that the Vindhya Pradesh Union would, from 1 January 1950, be taken over by the Central Government and administered as a Chief Commissioner's province (centrally administered area), consequent on a recent visit by the Secretary of the Ministry of States to Vindhya Pradesh and discussions with the rulers of the states comprising the Union. Vindhya Pradesh, a group of 35 states with an aggregate population of 3,500,000 and an area of 24,610 square miles, was formed on 2 April 1948 with the Maharaja of Rewa as Rajpramukh.

4. To Sri Krishna Sinha¹

New Delhi
28 December 1949

My dear Premier,

Your secret letter of the 26th December. I am very sorry to learn of the trouble

1. J.N. Collection.

you are having with the zamindars of your province and of the attitude of the High Court in this matter.

I do not myself see how Article 31 of the Constitution² can be introduced immediately. However I am referring the matter to our Law Ministry.

All this is certainly very troublesome for you. But I am not greatly worried about it. I cannot conceive of the law courts ultimately coming in the way of the Legislature in such a matter. If they try to do so, necessary steps will have to be taken speedily afterwards. We shall help you in that.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Article 31 stipulated that the law must specify the compensation or the principles on which it should be paid. The courts would have no say unless the compensation was so grossly inadequate as to amount to a fraud on the right to property.

5. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
29 December 1949

My dear Vallabhbhai,

When I learnt that you were going to Bombay, I thought that you would be back after two or three days. Now I learn that you are not likely to be back for about 10 days or so. I can perhaps just see you on the 7th before my departure for Colombo. In effect we shall hardly meet till I come back from Ceylon. We shall be terribly busy then with other matters.²

This is rather unfortunate because vital decisions have to be taken in the near future. This need not necessarily be done before 26 January, but it cannot wait too long afterwards.

I am very much worried about the state of affairs in the country. I am quite sure that if we allow this drift to continue, we shall invite disaster.³

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 8, pp. 375-376.
2. Patel replied on 1 January 1950 from Bombay that in view of Nehru's absence from Delhi he had thought it best to utilize his time and attend to several urgent matters in Bombay. He wrote that he would return on 6 January, a day earlier than originally planned.
3. Patel wrote that he fully shared "your anxiety and feel that with a determined and decisive attitude and policy we can still save the country."

6. To Gopichand Bhargava¹

New Delhi

30 December 1949

My dear Gopichandji,

You know that I have been greatly interested in the past in stopping ejectments of cultivators and tenants from their holdings in East Punjab. Quite apart from a certain injustice involved in this, I felt that it was a dangerous policy and was bound to lead to trouble. This would add to the refugee problem and communists and socialists would, no doubt, take advantage of this situation. Any ejectment from land affects the agrarian situation and creates agrarian trouble.

One aspect of this matter has been brought to my notice and this relates to Ferozepur and Amritsar which are border districts. I understand that tenants of the big landlords there are likely to be ejected and others settled as small proprietors. In particular, this relates to the Nawab of Mamdot's zamindari. Now I am all in favour of the big landlord going and small peasant proprietor taking his place. But, if this involves ejectment of existing cultivators and tenants, it is doing injustice to them and is bound to lead to trouble. I am told that Bhimsen Sachar gave some assurance to the old tenants, who had invested large sums of money in the improvement of these lands and the building of houses, that they would not be ejected. If they are now ejected, your Government will needlessly create a new situation of difficulty.

Communist influence is growing in these border districts. So to some extent socialist influence. But socialists have some national feeling and can be reasoned with to some extent. Not so the communists who are just out to create trouble.

It is always to be remembered that this border is the frontier of India and we can afford to take no risks with it. We can only deal with the communists and the like very partially through police methods. The basic way of dealing with them is to prevent a situation arising out of which they will gain advantage. I am, therefore, drawing your attention to this matter. If trouble is nipped in the bud, you will save yourself from far greater difficulty in future.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. To Amrit Kaur¹

New Delhi
16 January 1950

My dear Amrit Kaur,

I have seen your letter to Matthai about the election of women to Parliament. As you perhaps know, I sent a circular to this effect to all Provincial Governments. I spoke to some personally also. In spite of all this, it is true that very few women have been elected. I expressed publicly my disappointment at this in Madras.² I am afraid I can do nothing more at this stage.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. J.N. Collection.
2. See *ante*, p. 385.

8. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Death sentences in Hyderabad (Deccan) have been postponed. I would like you to appreciate strong feeling here on the subject of hundreds of murders, some of them exceedingly brutal which have taken place in certain districts of Hyderabad during past many months. These murders committed by all kinds of anti-social elements, dacoits etc., under some political label which has little application. Many devoted good Congress workers killed individually. There has unfortunately been great slackness on the part of Hyderabad authorities in dealing with the situation. We propose to tighten up our measures and deal with situation firmly. It surprises me that while so much interest is shown in regard to people sentenced after normal trial for heinous offences no sympathy is vouchsafed for the hundreds who have been murdered and no condemnation of murder campaign.

1. New Delhi, 20 January 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.

9. To P.S. Kumaraswami Raja¹

New Delhi
January 23, 1950

My dear Premier,

I enclose a letter received by me from Mr Allapichai.²

I can express no opinion about the selection of your candidates for election. But so far as the general principle is concerned, I am quite clear that tried Nationalist Muslims must be encouraged and preferred to others. In Madras there has been a hard core of extremely communalist Muslims. You will remember that when I came to Madras, I said some hard things about them. I do not see why we should encourage them in the slightest.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.
2. In a letter to A.M. Allapichai on 23 January 1950 (not printed) Nehru agreed with the principle that well-tried Nationalist Muslims should always be given precedence in elections and other matters. He wrote that he could only give general advice in matters concerning provincial elections.

10. To G.V. Mavalankar¹

New Delhi
January 23, 1950

My dear Mr Speaker,

Shri Kamath² has sent notice of a motion that the proceedings of the new Parliament should commence with a prayer to God. This matter was considered at a Congress Party meeting and it was felt that this motion should not be moved. Shri Kamath will, therefore, presumably not move it. There are obvious difficulties in having any kind of a set prayer, even if the idea of prayer be approved.

I made a suggestion then that perhaps it might be possible, if the Speaker agrees, for the House to stand up for a minute in silent prayer at the commencement of the proceedings on this occasion. The party meeting liked this idea and asked me to place it before you for your consideration. I am therefore doing so. It is of course for you to decide on the propriety and feasibility of doing this.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. File No. 32(47)-48/PMS.
2. H.V. Kamath, a Socialist Member of the Parliament.

11. To Syama Prasad Mookerjee¹

New Delhi
February 13, 1950

My dear Syama Prasad,

You will remember that last year I sent you a complaint about the Industries and Supply Ministry. This was to the effect that considerable partiality was being shown in appointments. You were good enough to send me some figures then.²

I have just received a statement regarding gazetted appointments made in the Industry and Supply Ministry and its attached organisations from 15th August to 22nd December. This statement does indicate that the number of Bengalis appointed is very considerable in relation to the total figure. It also shows that some of the senior appointments are of superannuated persons. I am not interested in provincial or communal percentages. But in view of repeated criticism, I think you should be careful to keep a certain balance. Of course, the chief criterion should be merit.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *Selected Works* (second series), Vol. 8, p. 207.

12. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
February 15, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

I am greatly worried by the communist tactics in prison² and outside, which compel us to use force against them frequently.³ It is evidently their policy to create as much trouble as possible, wherever they may be. Sometimes they put

1. File No. 21/29/50-Poll, M.H.A.

2. A secret circular from the Communist Party headquarters called upon communist detenus to organise agitation inside jail to "frustrate the Nehru Government tactics and to strengthen the party."

3. Under B.T. Ranadive, the communists had been following a policy of violence and sabotage since early 1948. Despite large-scale arrests by the Government, their agitation went on specially in West Bengal, Andhra, Madras, Bombay, eastern U.P., Punjab and Telengana in Hyderabad.

forward women to throw bombs. The result is that we are having frequent firings on them in and outside prison.⁴

It is clear that this kind of open war can only be met by firm measures. Any relaxation on our part would be fatal and would lead to widespread chaos.

At the same time repeated firing of the police, resulting in many deaths, has a bad effect on public opinion and to some extent serves the purpose of the communists by making Government unpopular. I refer to the communists here, because they are the chief offenders, but conflicts have taken place between the police and other people too, like students. I am not for the moment referring to the incidents in Bengal, which are of a special kind.

You will remember that one of the chief reasons for acute discontent in Calcutta just before the Sarat Bose election was the firing on women demonstrators.⁵ I have little doubt that firing was justified. What the people resented very greatly was that no proper enquiry was held after that firing, which resulted in several deaths. When we met in Working Committee at Dehra Dun⁶ we advised Dr Roy strongly to have an enquiry. This was before Sarat Bose's election. He was, however, not in favour of an enquiry. When I went to Calcutta after the election one of the major grievances of almost everybody, who came to see me, was this firing on the women and the absence of an enquiry afterwards. Even the Police Commissioner told me that in his opinion an enquiry should have been held and although it was late, it was still desirable to hold it. He said that the reputation of the police was suffering and an enquiry would even be good from the point of their morale and reputation.

That time I remember discussing this question with Rajaji. He was of opinion that we might make a rule or convention that whenever a major firing took place, there would automatically be an enquiry, that is other than a purely departmental enquiry. If there was such a convention, then no particular significance would be attached to a particular incident being selected for an enquiry. I felt he was right and, I remember, mentioning this in one of my fortnightly letters to the Premiers.⁷

4. The detention of prisoners without trial gave rise to a wave of agitation. Inside the jails there were frequent clashes between the detenus and the jail officials. Outside the relatives of the detenus and sympathisers organised demonstrations asking that either they should be released or brought for trial. The detenus put forward three demands—that their families should be given allowances, they should have free access to legal advisers, and should be provided with specific newspapers and periodicals. These demands led to clashes. The Government charged them with indiscipline and disrespectful behaviour. There were violent outbreaks resulting in casualties.
5. Violating the prohibitory orders, a procession was taken out in Calcutta on 27 April 1949 by a women's organisation supporting the demands of the political prisoners on hunger strike. The police opened fire on them killing seven persons including four women. The elections were held on 12 June 1949.
6. The A.I.C.C. met at Dehra Dun on 21 and 22 May 1949 in a secret session.
7. See *ante*, pp. 403-404.

Recently there have been a number of these firing incidents both inside and outside prison. In Salem prison it appears that a large number of people were killed by the firing. There is no doubt that the communists in prison there made an organised attack on the jail staff.⁸ In Nasik also there was this firing.⁹ So also in Sabarmati.¹⁰ I have a recollection that the Bombay High Court said something about the Sabarmati firing. Then there was the firing at Rewa and at Bareilly.

The Bareilly one was significant and particularly distressing.¹¹ It arose out of a very petty incident of two students on a bicycle. No trouble would have occurred there because of this incident, unless there had not been a great deal of bad blood between the police and the students. The general public in Bareilly sided entirely with the students and grave charges were made against the police. Pantji has, I believe, ordered an enquiry and suspended one or two police officers.

All this indicates that there is a growing tension between our police force and the public force and the public generally. Instead of our winning over the public against those who create trouble and commit sabotage etc., we are losing the support of that public and a feeling is rising against the police such as existed under the British regime. I think we should examine this situation very carefully and take such action as may be considered necessary. I cannot suggest any particular action. On the one hand we must keep up the morale of the police and not allow this to degenerate. On the other hand it is even more important for us not to anger the general public and create an impression in their minds that Government is oblivious of public opinion and relies only on its police and military.

One step, at any rate, appears to me necessary and desirable. That is the laying down of a convention that an enquiry should be held whenever there has been any major incident of firing on the public outside or inside prison. It may be that some of these enquiries criticise or condemn police action, or they may justify it. Even such criticism will not injure us or the police so much as a feeling in the public that the police are above criticism, whatever they might do.

I suggest, therefore, that we might suggest to State Governments that such a convention of having an enquiry in cases of firing should be adopted, except

8. Twenty two persons died and 100 were injured in the Salem jail firing. The Madras Government appointed a tribunal to inquire into the firing.
9. To disperse a mob of alleged communist prisoners, police opened fire in Nasik Central Jail on 6 February. One communist detenu died and another was injured. Thirty policemen were injured.
10. In Ahmedabad jail the police resorted to firing and killed two persons and injured forty two. In the judicial trial the judge held that the assembly was unlawful. In spite of that he accused the police for firing. "The contradiction is obvious but it shows the danger of making enquiries the general rule. The Bombay Government have already filed an appeal to the High Court against the acquittal on the charge of assaulting police officers and men," Patel replied on 21 February 1950.
11. Curfew was imposed and army called in on 4 February when students and police clashed in Bareilly. On 6 February, G.B. Pant visited the area and ordered suspension of three officials pending an inquiry.

in minor cases. The enquiry will have to be something other than or in addition to a purely departmental enquiry, which does not carry much weight with the public.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

13. To John Matthai¹

New Delhi
February 16, 1950

My dear Matthai,

I have been thinking a great deal about the proposals mentioned to us yesterday.² There is no particular proposal about which I should like to say anything, and I appreciate your general objective in framing them. That of course has to be borne in mind and in any event you had to balance all factors and come to a decision.

What has been worrying me somewhat is the fact that the net result of all this may have a bad reaction from the general public as well as from the party. That reaction will not be governed much by any particular proposal, but rather by a tendency and by the realisation that the interests of particular groups, however important they might be, have been attended to, while vast numbers of others, who are much more unhappily situated, have not been thought of much. This morning there was a discussion in the Congress Working Committee. Naturally the discussion had nothing to do with what you told us. It dealt rather with the general approach to our present economic problems and stress was laid on an approach which would give some hope to these large numbers of people, who are turning away from us.

I have no particular suggestion to make to you, because odd suggestions do not help in an integrated scheme. I am myself attracted by the general approach of the British Labour Party to economic problems in the U.K. I know that conditions in the U.K., are very different from our conditions and, in spite of everything, they are much better off. Still they have laid stress on a certain approach and a certain outlook and particularly emphasised that, whatever happens, they will try to aim at full employment. Obviously we cannot do so. But we might consider the problem with something of the social approach of the British Government. It is certainly equitable, but is in keeping with the spirit of the time.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. John Matthai suggested the need for a good statistical base for planning and felt that economic studies could not be developed without proper statistical support.

Looking at this question objectively, we have to analyse, understand and balance the various social forces at work in India, and pay more attention to what might be called the vital forces, which will ultimately lead to progress. From the strictly narrow point of view of elections and the like, this is of course important. But I am not too much concerned with the elections, but rather with present reactions on the country as a whole—whether these reactions produce a feeling of hopefulness or the reverse. All these are rather vague thoughts. But I feel I should place them before you. They are not my thoughts only. I think I interpret a very considerable feeling among others. I should like to encourage, as far as possible, our industrial and commercial classes. I want their cooperation. But I realise more and more that first of all, taken as a whole, they have not the vision or the ability to deliver the goods, and secondly, that even if they had that vision and ability, they cannot do so without a great deal of support from other classes. These other classes therefore become very important in any judgment of the situation and much depends upon their goodwill and cooperation. Much cannot be done. But a tendency and an approach can be made to make them feel that our primary concern is their interest and their cooperation. The general attitude taken up by the industrial and commercial classes during the past two years or so has not done them much credit in the eyes of the public. They have tried by pressure tactics to coerce Government into doing something that they wanted done. We have very largely tried to meet their viewpoint in our general policy and in our efforts to win them over. They have shown little appreciation of this and want more and more and, meanwhile, condemn Government action frequently. That should not affect any policy that we consider right. But that should make us realise that we cannot expect too much from them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14. To N.G. Ranga¹

New Delhi
February 20, 1950

My dear Ranga,

Thank you for your letter of the 17th February. I appreciate your writing to me frankly and giving me your views about various matters. I agree with some things

1. N.G. Ranga Papers, N.M.M.L. Extracts.

that you have said. With others I am not wholly in agreement, partly because I have to consider various factors which may not be before you.

So far as my work is concerned, it has been the work far more of a Prime Minister than that of a Foreign Minister. All the routine work of the Foreign Office is looked after by the Deputy Minister, the Secretary-General and the Foreign Secretary. I am consulted only in important matters. It would not make very much difference, if I was not Foreign Minister, so far as most of these matters are concerned, as I would have to be consulted even then. I agree with you, however, that it would be better for both Sardar Patel and me to divest ourselves of direct charge of Ministries. There are, however, certain inherent difficulties in this at present.

I should like to tell you that most of my time has been spent in dealing with our relations with Pakistan and Kashmir, both of which are closely allied, and relief and rehabilitation....

The real difficulty that crops up repeatedly is lack of common outlook in regard to certain vital matters between me and many members of the party. This has caused me more anxiety and has taken more of my time than anything else. So long as I am Prime Minister and have to shoulder this heavy responsibility, I would be false to my trust, if in matters of vital concern, I acted contrary to my own conviction. At the same time it is obvious that if our party feels strongly about any matter, it should have its way. There is thus sometimes this conflict which comes in the way of our work. The proper way to resolve that conflict is for the party to have a leader who is in tune with its own views and approaches to important questions. I would personally welcome that.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

15. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
March 4, 1950

My dear Vallabhbhai,

You were good enough to write to me a long letter on the 21st February. This related to various firings that had taken place. I need hardly say that I appreciate and understand what you have written.

1. File No. 21/29/50-Poll. M.H.A.

Nevertheless, I am greatly worried about certain developments. Each particular firing may be justified and it is perfectly true that a certain section of the people is out to create trouble and produce a situation when firing is the only alternative. The fact remains that if firing takes place too frequently, it means that we are losing grip of the situation. Also that our reputation in the country and outside suffers greatly. More particularly firing inside prison is normally very difficult to justify. It may have been the only course left to the jail officials on a particular occasion. But that reflects on the jail administration. I remember writing very forcibly about this some years ago. There can be little doubt that people in India as well as abroad are greatly perturbed at these developments here.

A Government should stand by its officers. But a Government's reputation should not be too closely attached to everything that an officer does. Otherwise the officers get careless, knowing that they will be supported anyhow, and the public distrusts the Government more and more because they feel that they always support an action by their officers. I think there is a tendency for our officers to behave in a manner which does not fit in with a democratic structure. They tend to revert to the days of British rule, when they looked upon the public as some kind of an enemy or opponent which had to be put down. This is a dangerous development, because it undermines the prestige of the Government with the people, apart from making our Services disliked. In the ultimate analysis we can only carry on with a large measure of public approval. We cannot function as the British Government did, nor can our officers or police function in the old way.

We have had recent instances, as at Bareilly, which are significant of the widening gap between the people and the police. As you know, I have been disturbed at happenings in Rewa. I have been connected with Rewa for the last 20 years and know conditions there fairly well. Those conditions have not been satisfactory and it is a somewhat troublesome area. I have had a feeling however that the way the local officers dealt with the situation there was very unwise. This feeling grew in intensity when I saw the order of the Administrator there sometime ago, in which he mentioned, *inter alia*, that he considered that the people who came to me to complain did something wrong. That was an amazing thing to say and gave a glimpse into his mentality. If a man is capable of saying that in an order, even though that order was passed in a hurry, that man is singularly incapable of holding responsible offices. I distrust his judgment and his previous actions are affected by it.

The recent horrible tragedy in Rajasthan, when a number of officers and men were killed by a large crowd, is of course a very serious affair. I suppose we shall gradually get to know more facts and action will be taken. But the fact that strikes me most is why such a thing should occur. It shows the hostility of the people against the police. There is something wrong about our system which produces such intense hostility of the people against the police. There is something wrong about our system which produces such intense hostility. These people may become

a very good field for propaganda by communists and others. If we are to deal with them properly, we have to win them over or at any rate not to make large numbers of them completely inimical.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

16. To Tara Singh¹

New Delhi
20 March 1950

Dear Master Tara Singh,

I have received your letter as well as your telegram.

There is no question of our not trusting the Sikhs. I am sure that whenever any need arises, they will give of their best to the nation.

I do not quite understand what you expect us to do. A Government should always pay particular attention to the safety of the nation and make all necessary preparations for it. There is no question of my hesitating to make up my mind. My mind is quite clear, and so is the policy which we desire to pursue.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

17. To V.P. Menon¹

New Delhi
March 30, 1950

My dear V.P.,

Thank you for your two letters of today's date.

Regarding Hyderabad, I think it is a good idea to associate popular elements with the Government. I entirely agree with the proposal you have made. Of course,

1. J.N. Collection.

much depends on the people who are chosen to join Government and the manner of their choosing.

From your letter it appears that out of eight Ministers, including the Chief Minister, only one will be a Muslim. I should have thought that at least two would be preferable.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9

FOREIGN POLICY

I. General

1. Pacifism in the Modern World¹

Mr Chairman² and Friends,

I have been listening with great interest to what has been said this afternoon. I had hoped perhaps you would simplify my task, but instead of that I feel I am a little more confused than what I was when I came here. I do not quite know what to say and what subject to tackle. Luckily I did not come here under a false pretence. Mr Horace Alexander said in the beginning that I was not a pacifist and he was right in saying so. We have, I suppose, no one who is a thorough-going pacifist and who can be connected with the modern government, so long as it retains the character of Government or a modern State such as this. No pacifist can be connected with Government which keeps an army, a navy and defence forces. So I am not a pacifist. But, it is possible not to be a pacifist and yet to be intensely desirous of maintaining the peace of the world and avoiding war.

You have been discussing this matter here and at Santiniketan and most of us who are sensitive and those who have to deal with public affairs have to think of some of these problems, at least in a variety of contexts. I have not succeeded in arriving at any kind of conclusion which I can put before you and before myself for a variety of reasons. But, first of all, the problem is difficult enough for an individual to solve as to what he should do about it. But it becomes infinitely more difficult when you are thinking in terms of what others should do. That is to say, a person in a position of authority, governmental or other, functions with certain material, i.e., human beings, the whole human being.

Now, that material may be influenced, may have to function, in a certain way. Obviously it is not very easy to make it function exactly as you want to. So, even if you are clear in your own mind as to what should be done, it is not an easy matter to make it clear to large number of human beings as to what they should do. They may occasionally become emotionally drawn to certain things but unless they have been trained in it, it will not carry them very far. First of all, the individual must grasp the truth, if I may say so. That is difficult enough and all kinds of questions arise.

The second difficulty which a person in authority, or a political man, or a leader, has to face is that he has to make other people grasp the truth, become receptive to the truth. It is a complicated thing. Therefore, if he is a leader, in a democratic sense of the word, he affects the public and is affected by them. He can carry them safely. He can make them receptive to truth. Presumably, their training in receptivity

1. Address to World Pacifist meeting, Sevagram, Wardha, 31 December 1949. Speeches and Writings, P.M.S. Also printed in *National Herald*, 1 January 1950.

2. Horace Alexander.

for new ideas and new ways of putting higher ideas may be limited. He is limited in his action by their being limited because he functions through them.

And that is a problem which every statesman has continually to face. It is all very well to say that this man should do this or that. Every society is limited by other people round about it. Nevertheless, he can function. Of course, the absolute way to function will be to live at the peak of the Himalayas. There he can be limited only by nature, not by human beings. But, on the whole, an individual can function and bear the consequences.

But what is that individual to do when he has others to work with who have passion, prejudices, hunger, etc? We can only hope that we are gradually training them and then gradually the training spreads. Well, that is the only way to do it. We then select persons and we set up here and there large organisations and suddenly a gust of passion comes and these groups are swept away.

I was in Geneva in 1938 when the Sudetenland incident had cropped up.³ It was the headquarters of international organisations, of large numbers of peace societies, men, women and children. At the time when the scare of war came almost everybody was numbed. There was a collection of 230 international organisations there. Nothing happened. There was no war just then because Governments did not choose to have war. It took place a year later. Now, they were swept away by circumstances. You have to understand how it can happen. I have no answer to it. Still one has certain faith that in spite of apparent disasters humanity goes in a certain direction. If you ask me to justify it logically, I cannot do it. If you have courage to do it you can do so. You may partly reason it out and justify the faith in it.

So, there is a fundamental difficulty and I have no answer for that. And, therefore, I have to function more or less without presuming to advise others what they should do. I have to decide myself what I have to do for particular reasons or circumstances which, I hope, lead in that direction. I have to compromise all the time and I have always to think in terms whether I should compromise or not, and I don't know whether it is ultimately good or not. Because, no compromising man standing alone and functioning in a democracy, benefits by standing alone. It is obvious that standing alone is a good thing and it must be done. It may also be that continuously standing alone makes you ineffective. So when you do not stand alone you have got to make some compromise.

If you compromise, the question is what do you compromise with? Are you compromising with evil? It is bad. Well, can you compromise holding on to the truth by not going too far in that direction? Possibly that is the justifiable compromise. You don't go far, perhaps because you cannot carry others far, but the way is the right one. I am just putting to you some of the difficulties that

3. Nazi agitation among the inhabitants of German-origin in the Sudetenland led to the Munich crisis in September 1938, following which the Sudetenland was ceded to Germany.

continuously one has to face. Now, today I am in a position of governmental responsibility and ultimately one merely goes step by step not knowing what the next step will be.

Today we talk about conflicts between East and West, that is between the European idea of the East and the West. It is very confusing. Here you talk about East and West which means conflict with the communists or with Russia. It is obvious that it is quite easy for anyone to choose to criticise this party or that and point out their failings. At the same time it seems to me obvious that there are virtues too, otherwise the parties won't be there. We have developed in the world gradually a certain social consciousness.

Now, socialism and communism have, apart from their mechanistic aspects and violence etc., an idealistic element. It attracts people. These ideas have a certain social consciousness which attracts people. This consciousness has grown, but perhaps not to a very great extent. We talk about democracy and democracy is a good thing. But obviously a purely political democracy may not mean very much to the average individual. In a country like India, which is poverty-stricken and industrially backward, people are more interested in the primary needs of life than in theories. There may be democracy or capitalism or communism or socialism, but they want their primary needs of life satisfied and that is a fundamental thing. They are not interested in God, if I may say so. After that other things arise.

Therefore, whatever way you may choose out of the difficulties, it must be a way which satisfies the primary needs of the people. It is no good being philosophical and theoretical and talk about this ideal or that unless you satisfy those primary needs. The essential difference between India and the other countries in the East and countries in Europe is this that the countries of Europe and America have not got to face the problem of primary needs to the same extent as we have to. The problem of primary needs in Europe is not of course exactly satisfactorily solved, but still it is not there to that extent to which it exists in Asia. No doubt the war has caused much damage in Europe but still the conditions are not so bad as in India. The governments there have not to face this problem of primary needs and therefore their minds may turn to other thoughts, such as power conflict, war and the rest.

It is not a question of Indians being virtuous men. Don't be under a mistaken impression. I have heard a lot of praise of Indians. Don't believe that they have behaved in an admirable manner. They have behaved in a most scandalous and disgraceful manner. I have seen it and so I say that. But inevitably they do not think in terms of power politics. We have other things to attend to. Of course, some occasions may arise and we may get entangled in power politics, and that may lead to war. But, as I said, the needs of Asia are primary needs, and when they are satisfied, then other questions arise. Because of those primary needs, any philosophy of action or anything that promises to fulfil those needs is bound to appeal to the people inevitably. It is not a question of ideology or "ism".

Therefore the question to which governments have to apply themselves is, how the primary needs of people can be satisfied. Of course, not by magic. The needs do exist. Something has to be done which brings fulfilment of those needs nearer. So, in order to have a look at it in the world context, first of all I think that in spite of very big conflicts in Europe there is no danger of war in Europe, none whatever. The danger of war comes from the fact that certain conditions exist in Asia and Africa.⁴ And I have no doubt whatever that if those conditions are not remedied with some rapidity, that will lead to a big conflict. I have no doubt whatever that if conditions in Africa are not improved—I cannot fix any time period—but in a considerably short time, there will be trouble on the biggest scale in Africa and elsewhere. So, without going into the philosophy of these matters and as a practical person having to deal with these matters, I want to remove some of the obvious causes of war that I see. There may be other causes besides those that I have stated. But still let me remove those which I can tackle. I will try to do so. Whether I succeed or not is another matter.

Now, coming back to India, I am perfectly convinced of what I say. It is just fantastic nonsense for people to talk of India being the leader of Asia. It irritates me, because it is not a real thing. It only flatters the vanity of the Indian people by being called so. The first thing they have to learn is to look after themselves. That is in itself a big job and a very big problem. And in the minds of Indians, not today only but from times past, there is great conflict—conflict of the spirit pulling them in different directions. To my thinking it is not such a simple matter. If you think that by sitting in Sevagram you have seen India, you are wrong. You have seen selected people, excellent people, who have done good work. But they are as much part of India as ten thousand other groups who are different from them. They represent ten thousand other ways.

Take for example, a house here where Gandhiji lived for many years. Mahatma Gandhi is of course almost worshipped all over India. So, most people will say that we must follow the path chalked out by Mahatma Gandhi. But everybody will also have different ideas of what Mahatma Gandhi stood for, and may be some of the persons who worked in the closest companionship with him have got the quaintest notions of what he stood for. Quaintest, I say in the sense of very narrow notions. Now, Mahatma Gandhi stood for a number of things—many, many things. It is amazing to see how many activities he took up and whatever he took up he took up earnestly. It is astonishing. You can make a list of things. Now, some person

4. There was resentment in Asia of the European domination of parts of Asia. The communists also gained support in countries where they were seen as a liberating movement. In Africa, the white settlers, in spite of being in a minority, controlled the governments and were not prepared to share power with others. South Africa practised apartheid, applauding it as a basic precept of her political philosophy.

may say that Mahatma Gandhi stood for vegetarianism, and therefore that is an important thing. May be. He did stand for vegetarianism. For me it is not of much consequence. I am not a vegetarian and I do not propose to be one whether he stood for it or not.

So, there are so many things and each person takes a little of him and says this is the most vital thing he stood for and he sat in a hut or somewhere without making reference to anybody in the wide world. Most of you have not seen him. He was a dynamic personality as great men are. He changed. He adapted himself to the changing situation and controlled it. But those who follow him follow the letter of the law and fail to come to grips with the situation.

One of the horrible and painful things that happened in India after she got freedom was the enormous growth of narrow communalism against which he preached all his life. And I find it among people who are his colleagues and my colleagues. I do not know where we shall be led by this. Now, under these circumstances, am I to come and preach to you what India stands for? I have not presumed to do that. I have got a big enough job and I will try to use my countrymen to do this or that. So, if we are going to do anything worthwhile in the wide world, obviously we must begin with ourselves and not approach others. If we do not succeed here obviously we are a failure.

In a sense, I may say, India does stand in a favourable position and it is just conceivable that she may, to some extent, be a bridge between different ways of approaching the problems. What we want—and I am not going into any high-flown philosophy—may be broadly called a democratic approach or democracy in the widest sense of the term, that is, not only political democracy but more or less an economic democracy also. We see on the one side stress being laid on political democracy, on the other, on economic democracy minus individual freedom. Now, as I said if you ask an average poor peasant or worker in India, he attaches more importance to the primary necessities of life than to some abstract freedom. And quite naturally. Nevertheless, freedom is a very valuable thing. So also individual freedom. I am quite convinced that unless men have individual freedom they cannot progress in the end. They become stunted. Now, can one join that individual freedom in a democratic concept with economic freedom also? I do not know, because one sees one extreme on the one side and another on the other.

We have a chance in India. Every country has a chance. We have a chance in the sense that we are fortunately starting in a way on a clean slate in regard to international relations. We are not tied up to any country or any particular international foreign policy. That is an advantage and it flows more or less from what we have been saying and doing for the last 20 or 30 years under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. Of course, we had no foreign policy so long as we were a subject nation; but nevertheless we were thinking in terms of it. Our approach is not a negative one; it is a positive approach to the problem, and we try in our own way to understand that. At the same time our capacity is not so great as to influence

world events; we may occasionally make some difference a little later; but in any event, the problem before us is how to maintain individual freedom and a democratic approach to life and at the same time economic democracy.

May I put it in another way? The tendency in the world today has been a tendency against which many of you probably protested against—a tendency for growing centralisation, bigger and bigger units of wealth, power, etc., whether it is a corporation, or whether it is a government, whatever it may be, it becomes bigger and bigger and naturally the more centralisation there is the less of individual freedom. This centralisation ultimately leads to a totalitarian State which is completely powerful and denies individual freedom, and in the economic sense makes people helpless. The capitalist system of the nineteenth century has ceased to exist. The tendency now is for these forces to go in another direction or as in America where it has grown and developed powerful concentration of capital and industries, but which do come in the way again of a particular type of individual freedom that we may value. I do not personally think that we can do away with centralisation in the modern world; you can limit it by all means; but I rather doubt whether you can limit it to the extent you wish. Therefore, the problem is to combine individual freedom and the amount of centralisation which is inevitable in the modern world. To have an answer for this you will have to experiment.

I was asked two questions: one was a very simple question, about the English language. I think it is obvious that English cannot have the same position in India as it has had in the past two or three generations. But I also think it is equally certain that English will remain a widespread language in India, a compulsory language in the universities etc., for people to learn. It may be that even a larger number of people than today will know English, but will know it rather badly.

Dr Johnson⁵ referred to South Africa. I will say something about that too. I have no doubt that just as today's problem in the world ceases to be European but Asian, tomorrow's problem will be Africa, if you cannot solve any of these problems quickly. So far as India is concerned, we are not only conscious of this fact but we have in other places laid stress on it, whether in the United Nations or in the diplomatic dealings with other powers or in Africa itself. In Africa, there are a large number of Indians, mostly traders, and there is no doubt that there is a tendency on the part of these people to exploit the indigenous population. We have repeatedly, in public and in private, stated that we are not going to support any Indian interest in Africa which in any sense infringes on African interests. We have come into conflict not with African interests, but with other interests whether in South Africa or in Kenya where solid blocks of land are reserved for

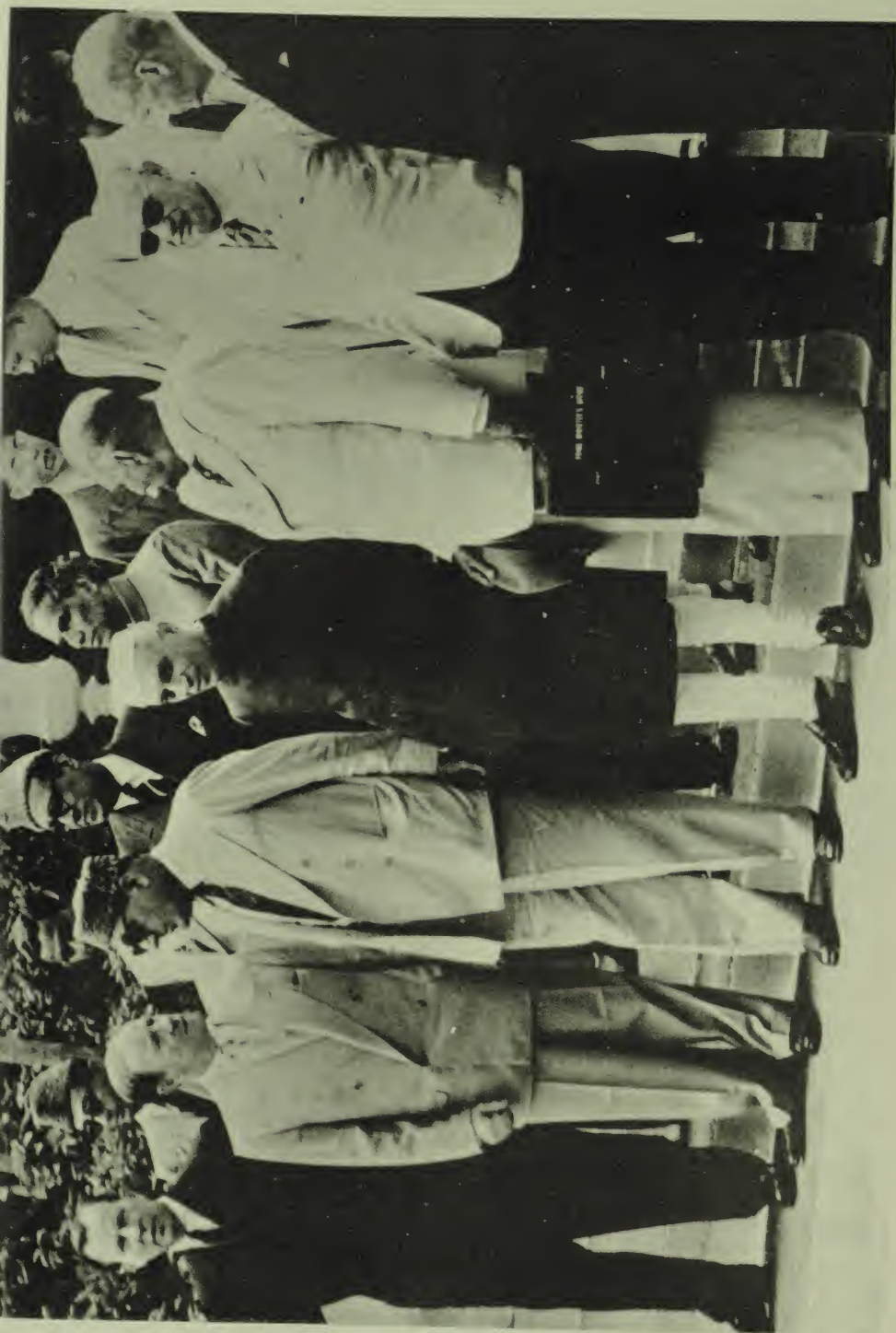
5. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson (1890-1976); first black President of Howard University, Washington, 1926-1960; Vice-Chairman of the National Council for the Prevention of War in the United States at this time.



AT THE WORLD PACIFISTS' MEETING, SEVAGRAM, 31 DECEMBER 1949



ARRIVAL IN COLOMBO, 8 JANUARY 1950



DELEGATES TO THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS, 9 JANUARY 1950



RECEIVING THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF LAWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY
OF CEYLON, 12 JANUARY 1950

Europeans into which neither Indians nor Africans can go.⁶ We have come into conflict there, and we have protested.

Undoubtedly there was a tendency for the Indians also to join in the process of exploitation of the indigenous population. We made it perfectly clear that we do not want even a single Indian, unless he is exploited by the population of Africa, to be a party to exploitation, and I am glad to say that in spite of efforts made to create trouble between Indians and Africans, they are cooperating more and more and helping each other.

May I just put to you a difficulty I often feel? What exactly is violence? It is not an easy question for me to answer. It is obvious some things are violent. You talk about state violence; war itself is state violence. Then there is individual violence too. I find sometimes that a person who calls himself a complete pacifist still behaves in a most violent manner so far as I am concerned. I refer to the individual violence, the violence in the real sense of the word, that is behaviour in a most uncontrolled way. One may not physically hit somebody else. Still out of him spreads an atmosphere of violence. So, it is difficult to know what is violence and what is not. A pacifist who is terribly narrow in vision is likely to make others narrow also. Instead of helping in spreading the idea of nonviolence, he really hinders its spread. So it becomes important how you place these ideas before the world. You have got a whole background of experience which leads you to a certain decision; there are others who have their own experience leading to some other decision. How are you going to convert them to your way? The whole process is one of conversion of others. It is in fact a positive dynamic approach, not a negative or passive approach to the problem. It is not what a man utters that matters. Slogans do not make a man. What the man is counts for something.

6. The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946, which replaced the Pegging Act of 1943, restricted the acquisition and occupation of land by Asians in Natal.

2. Social Justice¹

...It has become common place now to say that the outstanding event of the present day is the emergence of Asia. This emergence, coming after a long period of subjection and stunted growth, has brought to us a large number of vital problems which incessantly call for solution. The problem of political freedom having been largely solved, we have now to face the more basic and intricate problems of economic advance. We face an Asia, industrially and economically backward, but

1. Message to the Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Conference, held at Nuwara Eliya, Colombo, 14 January 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

with a new social consciousness and with labour wide awake, insistent, and sometimes turbulent. We may criticise this spirit of turbulence and regret it. But let us remember that for generations past this labour has seldom had a square deal and if they are insistent in their demands today, are we to condemn them? We can reason with them, we appeal to them, we can explain to them the facts of the situation, and, if we do so, I am sure they will understand and give their cooperation. But they will do so only if they are convinced of the social justice of our planning and our objectives. No plan and no approach is good enough if the burden of it falls chiefly on labour.

We want every group to progress. We mean ill to none. But it must always be remembered that if anything comes in the way of the progress of the large masses of our people, then that obstruction has to be removed. The final test is: what is good for the people generally and not what is good for a particular section only...

3. Salient Features of India's Foreign Policy¹

In presenting these demands, perhaps it will suit the convenience of the House if I make some kind of general statement in regard to the work we are doing and the policy we are attempting to pursue in regard to our foreign affairs.

I shall not endeavour to go into the intricate mass of what is happening all over the world, although, situated as we are and being an independent country of substance and importance, it is quite impossible for us to keep apart from the many things that happen in various parts of the world. Ever since India became an independent entity in foreign affairs we were interested in these various happenings all over the world. Indeed we were interested in foreign affairs even before that. But the first thing that we kept in view was to build our own country on solid foundations and not to get entangled in matters which did not directly affect us—not that we are not interested in these matters, but the burden of these entanglements would be too great and the problems we had to face in our own country were big enough for any country to face, as the House knows.

So, our general approach has been not to interfere in other matters and not to take part in the various conflicts in other parts of the world insofar as we can help it. Of course, as a member-nation of the United Nations, we have to take part when debates take place and we have to express our opinion. In many other subsidiary organs of the United Nations dealing with many other matters we had to express our opinion, in particular in relation to Asiatic countries with which

1. Speech in the Parliament while presenting the demands for the Ministry of External Affairs, 16 March 1950. *Parliamentary Debates, (Official Report)* Vol.III, Pt.II, 15th-31st March 1950, pp.1694 to 1708, 1735-1736 and 1741-1743. Extracts.

India is particularly connected. We have followed this policy with greater or less success as the House may judge. When the world is full of tension and possible conflicts and people's passions are excited, it is a little difficult to look on with equanimity at a country which tries at any rate not to be entangled in this way and not to allow momentary passions to govern its actions. So it happens that other countries look with a certain amount of disapproval at a policy which perhaps they consider either an unwise policy or a weak policy or a policy of inaction or some kind of neutrality.

While I have spoken on some occasions in this House on this subject and have ventured to point out that whatever policy we were pursuing was not just merely neutral or passive or negative, but that it was a policy which flowed from our past history, from our recent past and from our national movement and from the various ideals that we have proclaimed from any point of view, whether long-term or short-term that you may apply to the circumstances existing today. If the House goes back a little and thinks of other countries and other situations, completely different of course, but nevertheless comparable, it would see that in a country like India, which has newly become independent and which has to guard its independence and which has also to solve many problems that have accumulated in the past, it becomes an inevitable policy not only to try to the best of its ability to help in the maintenance of world peace, but also not to get entangled insofar as it can in world conflicts. Whether that is possible or not is another question. How far our influence can make a difference to world forces is also another question. I do not pretend to say that India as she is can make a vital difference to world affairs. So long as we have not solved many of our problems, our voice cannot carry the weight that it normally will and should. Nevertheless, every little thing counts in a crisis and we want our voice and our weight to be felt in certain directions which were for the avoidance of world conflict.

We wanted to follow a policy, not a negative or merely neutral policy, but a positive policy naturally helping those forces that we consider right and naturally disapproving of the things that we do not like, but fundamentally keeping apart from other countries and other alignments of powers which normally lead to major conflicts.² That does not mean that we do not, in our economic life or other life, incline this way or that in respect of many matters. But it does mean, in the jargon of the day, that we do not line up with this set of forces or that and try to maintain

2. By 1948 the Soviet Union had drawn within its political orbit the seven East European countries of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia. The American bloc had by March 1949 armed itself with pacts and alliances—the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance of August 1947, the Brussels Pact of 17 March 1948 and the Atlantic Pact of March 1948—all designed to forge solidarity among the countries of Western Europe and North America.

a certain friendliness and spirit of cooperation with the other great and small countries of the world.

The House knows what we are up against today. For some years past we have talked about the atom bomb. Now the atom bomb is supposed to be a back number with the coming of the hydrogen bomb. What the hydrogen bomb is few people know except the high experts I suppose.³ But from what little information we can gather, it seems to be something which may well destroy the world or a great part of it if it is used in any numbers.

Now we have come to the stage when for the solution of problems or for the solution of conflicts some people think even in terms of large-scale destruction of the world itself. Logically it seems an odd way of solving a problem. It is the way of ridding an individual of his disease by killing him or trying to cure a headache by cutting off the head of the person concerned. Nevertheless, it is significant and indicative of what the world is thinking today, that people should even think of the use of such weapons of uttermost destruction as the hydrogen bomb. So far as we are concerned, we may express pious opinions about it. We do it. Anyhow, we have neither got the hydrogen bomb nor are we likely to have it. But it is important for us to consider this tendency in world affairs to think of destruction on a large scale, which is unimaginable at least for us.

So I shall not speak about this larger world policy except to say that nothing has happened in recent months to make us change the policy we have been pursuing in regard to its essentials. Obviously minor shifts or minor directions may be given to that policy but in its major aspects, major essentials or major directions I think the policy we have been pursuing is a correct policy and indeed it is the only policy that a country situated like India can pursue.

May I just refer to a period of history when a very great nation of the modern world, the United States of America, attained her freedom. It seems a long time ago and we perhaps imagine that the conflicts of today are more vital and more serious than the conflicts of a hundred and fifty—or whatever the period—years ago. In some ways that may be true but if you look back one hundred and fifty or one hundred and sixty years ago you will see a Western world breaking up and all kinds of revolutionary or imperial wars. The United States of America had come into being as an independent country, having broken off from the British Empire of the day and the policy that the United States of America of that day pursued, deliberately pursued was one of not being entangled in those great wars and upheavals that were taking place in Europe and which affected them of course.⁴

3. The production of more effective atomic bombs was announced on 1 August 1949 by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. On 20 September, there were reports of an atomic explosion in Siberia and of a new hydrogen bomb by the U.S. which was said to be a thousand times deadlier than the one which killed 40,000 people and injured another 42,000 in Nagasaki.
4. The Munroe Doctrine forbade American entanglement in European disputes.

No doubt they had their sympathies but they kept away because that was a natural thing for a nation in that particular state of affairs to do. Now that analogy may not be a particularly good analogy in the circumstances of today; yet it has a bearing and I wish to point out to this House, apart from the very special reasons we may have, that that is the natural policy for a country newly freed and newly become independent to pursue.

I referred to the United States of America, because as the House knows a few months ago I visited that great country, when I had the honour and privilege of meeting not only the great ones of that country and being accorded a most cordial and friendly welcome but receiving that welcome from the other people, the so-called common people, the ordinary people of the land—which showed what an abundance of friendship and goodwill existed there for our country. I value that very much and I was greatly impressed by it and I was impressed also by the great achievements of the United States of America, from which we can learn so much. Naturally, I do not wish my country merely to copy any other country, because in whichever direction we may grow we have to grow out of the roots from which our nation finds sustenance; we have to follow the genius of our people. It is true also that one cannot remain in the roots all the time but one has to grow branches, green leaves and beautiful flowers and therefore one has to adapt oneself and learn from other countries a great deal. I feel that we can learn a great deal from the U.S.A. as well as from other countries of the West and we should take every advantage of that learning. But the main thing is that if India is to grow and prosper, we cannot do so either by imagining that we can isolate ourselves from the world and stick only to our roots or imagining that we can do so relying too much on ourselves or keeping too much away from the outside world. We have to have both and we have to strike a balance between the two and then only can we make good.

In whatever field of activity we might function, and more especially in the field of foreign policy, if India is to have any weight, she must function according to the way of her own thinking and the methods she can adopt herself. That way of thinking may be affected by other people—in fact it should be affected—because it is not an isolated thinking regardless of reality; but nevertheless the resultant must be her own way of thinking. If she chooses it to be her own way, if it is not derived from her own experience, desires, objectives and ideals, then it becomes a feeble imitation of some other way and it all becomes ineffectual and ineffective. It may be that some countries are so situated, they are so small in size, or in economic or other aspects of importance, that they cannot resist and inevitably they are swept by great forces and by the policies of great powers. India today, whatever else she may be, is neither small in extent, nor in importance, nor in potential resources, nor in the tremendous background of thought and action behind her. She may fail or succeed but whether she fails or succeeds, she does so because of her own strength or weakness, not because of other people sweeping her away.

We have today a new Asia. The biggest problem of the modern world is the resurgence of Asia. It is a tremendous event: there is a great deal of good in it and a great deal that we do not like also, as always happens when these major transformations take place. What is happening in Asia is the biggest thing of this century. I think, it affects us, because we are in Asia: it affects us because we are in a strategic part of Asia, set in the centre of the Indian Ocean, with intimate connections of the past and of the present, with western Asia, with South East Asia and with Far Eastern Asia. We could not ignore it, even if we would and we do not want to ignore it. Now that the British rule has passed off from India, from Burma⁵ and from other parts and the greater part of Asia is free of the colonialism of the past, inevitably our minds go back to old days, to old relationships with other countries, whether of Western Asia or the East or the South East. To some extent our minds skip over this period of colonial history and we try to pick up old threads again. Old threads yes; but pick them up in a new way, because new conditions have arisen. So India is intimately connected by force of circumstances and by geography with all those countries who are our neighbours in Asia. The House knows how much active and friendly interest we took and what we did in regard to the Indonesian Republic, which is now the United States of Indonesia.⁶ And the House will also remember that we had the honour and privilege of welcoming here the President of the United States of Indonesia, Mr Soekarno, a short while ago. He came here not only as the head of this great new independent States but as a gallant fighter for freedom and a fighter who had achieved his objective and had succeeded in spite of very great difficulties. It was a pleasure to meet him here, to confer with him and to find how much in common we had in our outlooks—in our national outlooks, in our individual outlooks. So we become more and more intimately connected, not by formal treaties and alliances and pacts but by bonds which are much more secure, much more binding—the bonds of mutual understanding and interest, and, if I may say so, to some extent even of mutual affection.

So also other countries round about us. There is Burma which has seen a great deal of trouble—internal trouble—in the course of the last two or three years and

5. On 4 January 1948.

6. India convened a conference of Asian and South East Asian countries at Delhi in January 1949 to consider the situation which had arisen in Indonesia by the unjustified action of the Dutch. In April-May 1949 India in conjunction with Australia brought up the matter before the Security Council.

has faced these enormous difficulties.⁷ Naturally, our Government and our people have been interested in the future of Burma, and in the present of Burma. It is not our purpose, and it is not right for us, to interfere in any way in other countries. But inevitably, we are greatly interested, and where possible we give such help as we can to our friends. And we have ventured to do so in regard to Burma too, without any element of interference.⁸

Among the other countries round about us, obviously the nearest of our neighbours which is affecting our present life is Pakistan. I shall refer to our relations with Pakistan at some greater length at a later stage. Among the other countries there is Nepal, almost geographically a part of India, though an independent nation. Recently we had a visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal here in India.⁹ We welcomed this distinguished person and we conferred with him, and it was clear that so far as certain important matters were concerned, so far as certain developments in Asia were concerned, the interests of Nepal and India were identical. We are interested of course in the development of freedom in all countries, more especially in Asian countries. We are interested in the abstract and we are interested in that as a practical and necessary step today in the context of Asia, because if it does not come it creates and encourages those very forces which ultimately may disrupt freedom itself. So freedom becomes essential, and we have advised in all earnestness the Government of Nepal—insofar as a friendly power can advise an independent nation we have advised them in all earnestness—that in the inner context of Nepal it is desirable to pay attention to the forces that are moving in the world—the democratic forces, the forces of freedom—and to put oneself in line with them, because not to do so is not only wrong according to modern ideas but unwise according to what is happening in the world today. It is clear, as I said, that in regard to certain important matters, the interests of Nepal and India, are inevitably joined up. For instance, if I may mention it, it is not possible for any Indian Government to tolerate any invasion of Nepal from anywhere. It

7. Immediately after the achievement of Burma's independence there were many revolts against the Government. Throughout 1949 there was intense civil war besides the unrest from the Karens who demanded a sovereign State. The authority of the Central Government was limited to a small area surrounding Rangoon.
8. On 28 February 1949, the Government of India convened a conference of the representatives of the Commonwealth States in Delhi to find ways by which their Governments could help the Burmese Government to maintain law and order. They also offered to mediate between the Karens and the Government of Burma. A proposal by the Commonwealth States to give economic aid to Burma was also discussed.
9. Mohun Shamsher, the Nepalese Prime Minister, visited Delhi on 17 February 1950 to discuss with Indian leaders matters relating to mutual security problems arising out of China's claim over Tibet. The Nepalese Prime Minister returned to Kathmandu with the draft of a treaty of peace and friendship which was concluded between the two countries on 31 July 1950.

is not necessary for us to have a military alliance with Nepal. We do not go about having military alliances with any country. We have none. But apart from any pact or alliance, the fact remains that we cannot tolerate any foreign invasion, from any foreign country, of any part of this Indian sub-continent or whatever you may like to call it. And any possible invasion of Nepal would inevitably involve the safety of India. May I add that I have not the slightest apprehension of any invasion of Nepal? I am merely stating a fact. I do not think any such invasion of Nepal is easily possible, nor do I think it is at all likely. But I wish to make this clear to the House and to others what our policy in such matters is bound to be.

Among our other neighbour nations there is Afghanistan with whom recently we had a treaty of friendship.¹⁰ We have been friendly with Afghanistan not today only but for a long period of history. That history shows conflicts with Afghanistan and shows periods of long-standing friendship. It shows the cultural contacts between the two. We have affected their culture, they have affected ours. So, it has been a great satisfaction to us that these old contacts have not only been renewed between independent India and Afghanistan but have actually progressed. And we are therefore on the friendliest terms with Afghanistan. May I say in this connection that because of great tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan over various matters we are continually being charged with having secret intrigues¹¹ with Afghanistan and trying to make Afghanistan adopt a certain policy in regard to Pakistan which, possibly apart from us Afghanistan might not. That, of course, I regret to say, is one of the numerous things without foundation which emerge from Pakistan. We are friendly to Afghanistan, and we propose to continue to be very friendly to Afghanistan. We are also, if I may say so, interested in the future of many of those areas and peoples who inhabit the Frontier.¹² We are interested, whatever the political or the international aspect may be, because we have had close bonds with them in the past and no political change can put an end to our memories and those old links that we had. I have hesitated in the past to refer to many things that were happening in the Frontier Province because it was not our policy to criticise internal happenings in Pakistan. But sometimes I have been compelled by circumstances

10. A five-year treaty of "perpetual friendship" between India and Afghanistan was signed on 4 January 1950.

11. During the British period the tribal areas of Afghanistan were deemed to be independent territory but under British suzerainty. After the British withdrawal Afghanistan revived her claim on them. Meanwhile, statements were made by responsible people in Pakistan that the tribal areas were an integral part of Pakistan. This led to anti-Pakistan agitation in Afghanistan and strained relations. The Afghan ambassador in Karachi with most of his staff went back to Kabul. Rumours were spread in Pakistan that India had been financing Afghanistan.

12. The Khudai Khidmatgars were subjected to extreme repression in the Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr Khan Sahib were treated harshly for demanding internal freedom for the Pathans within Pakistan. There was bombing from the air of the tribal areas by the Pakistan Air Force to crush the Khudai Khidmatgars.

to make some brief reference to the fate of our colleagues there, friends who have played a more important part than most of us—in fact more important than almost many of us, barring a few—in the struggle for India's freedom. It would be false of me and somewhat inhuman of me to say, or for any one to imagine, that we can forget those people who stood side by side with us for a whole generation in the fight for India's freedom. So we are intimately interested, and it is an abiding regret to us that we can only be interested from a distance and cannot help in the solution of this problem.

Among the other countries of Asia, I should like to mention briefly Indo-China which has come to the front recently because of internal conflicts there.¹³ The policy we have pursued in regard to Indo-China has been one of not interfering at all. It may be that some Honourable Members have their sympathies with one group or the other there, but it is manifest that we cannot interfere with any advantage to ourselves or, I think, to world peace. Our interference in any event could only be some kind of a theoretical one. I do not think a theoretical interference or any other interference in a country struggling for freedom in various ways can do any good because one of the major factors of the situation in countries which have been under colonial domination is this: they resent foreign interference. Their nationalism does not like it and if interference comes, it often becomes a kind of weapon in the hands of those opposed to nationalism because they seek out that this nationalism is not a free, independent nationalism but that it is controlled by others. There is that difficulty always, even when that interference is with the best motives. That is why we have sought deliberately to keep away from any interference in any country and in regard to Indo-China we have not interfered in any way and we intend keeping apart.

Then I come to the great country, China. Very great changes, revolutionary changes, have taken place in that country and some people may approve of them and some may not. It is not a question of approving or disapproving; it is a question of recognising a major event in history and of appreciating it and dealing with it. Because of this, nearly three months ago or less, when it was quite clear that the new Chinese Government was in possession of practically the entire mainland of China, when it was quite clear that this Government was a stable Government and that there was no force which was likely to supplant it or to push it away, we offered recognition to this new Government and suggested that we might exchange diplomatic missions. Since then events have progressed rather slowly. Partly it may be due to the fact that certain important members of that Government were away from their own country. In any event, the present position is this, that there is a general agreement about such an exchange and a representative of ours

13. In Indo-China there were two Governments, one sponsored by Russia supported Ho Chi Minh, the other under the French supported Bao Dai. The neighbouring countries of Asia hesitated to take a decision on the recognition of either of these Governments.

who used to be a Secretary to our Embassy in Nanking has proceeded to Peking to discuss certain matters of detail with the Peking Government. I hope that before long Ambassadors will be exchanged and then we can deal with each other properly through those Ambassadors.

In regard to the other countries of Asia, our relations are friendly and satisfactory with Iran,¹⁴ with Egypt which is not in Asia, of course, but associated with Asia, and with the other countries of the Middle East as it is called.

To go to another part of the world, we have recently had many new diplomatic missions established here from South America. Now, South America is very far away and apparently there is not much knowledge of South America in India, but there is a great deal common, I think, between India and South America in so many ways; and I have little doubt that in the future the nations of South America will play an important and ever-growing part and so I welcome these new contacts with the countries of South America.

Then there is the great Continent of Africa which is still more or less a colonial Continent. The House knows that we have recently sent a Minister to Ethiopia, one of the independent parts of Africa. Also, we have played some part in the United Nations in determining the future of Northern Africa and we hope that in the course of a few years independent nations will be built up there.¹⁵ But, in the main, when one talks about the African problem, what I have in view is that great mass of people, the Africans, the Negroes if you like, who live in the great Continent. It is clear that mighty forces are moving in that Continent; how long they will take to develop I do not know, but they are moving and in the course of this generation great changes are likely to take place in Africa. If those changes take place peacefully and by cooperation, well and good, if not, I fear that perhaps some of the biggest conflagrations might take place there because, any kind of a conflict between nations is bad enough, but when that conflict takes a racial shape and becomes a racial war then it is infinitely worse. Naturally, we in India have sympathised with the Africans and we have repeatedly—not only as a Government but, before we became a Government, as a national party—assured them and told them that we do not want any Indian vested interest to grow up in Africa at the expense of the African people. I am glad to say that a realisation of this fact is helping in the development of friendly relations between Indians and Africans, in East Africa especially, and in some other parts also.

14. India signed a treaty with Iran on 15 March 1950.

15. Throughout the discussion on the liberation of the peoples of North Africa at the U.N. General Assembly and the Political Committee in 1949, India maintained that the future of the colonies was to be decided in reference to the wishes of the people concerned. She urged that the territories fit for independence should be granted immediate independence and the rest should be put under United Nations Trusteeship with a definite time limit. India moved a resolution for the administration of these territories as trust territories by the U.N. itself.

In South Africa we have had the problem of Indians there, that is to say, the problem of South Africans who are of Indian descent but who are South African nationals. Recently, a kind of a conference was held there and one of the distinguished Members of this House represented us at this conference. This conference was really a preparatory conference to the holding of a full round table conference. Insofar as the preparatory conference could succeed, it has succeeded. Of course, it has not solved the problem and the whole problem remains. It is a difficult problem but nevertheless it is something that we have gone one step forward in it.

Coming back to India, there is Ceylon, another independent country which has had the most intimate contacts with India for ages past and which is, in many ways, culturally very closely associated with us. I had occasion to visit Ceylon some months ago in connection with the Dominion Foreign Ministers' Conference, and it was a great pleasure to me to go there and to find that, even though we argue a great deal on the Governmental level and sometimes we cannot find agreement, yet the friendliness of the Ceylonese people to us remains the same. I am sorry that the problem of Indians in Ceylon is still not wholly solved.¹⁶ We have done our best to put our point of view and to some extent it was accepted and to some extent it was not. I hope that some way out will be found, because in regard to Ceylon and India I refuse to think in terms of any kind of conflict.

May I now come to our relations with Pakistan, which have completely overshadowed not only much of our domestic life but, to some extent, our foreign policy also ever since we became independent. We agreed to the constitution of Pakistan by the partition of India because of a variety of things that had happened previously. We accepted it as a fact and we hoped that that would at least solve some of the problems that had troubled us in the past. We did not accept it at any time on the basis of a two-nation theory, but on the basis of some kind of territorial self-determination. It so happened, of course, that certain territories had a majority population of one community or the other, but in whatever way you could have divided India, it was perfectly clear that it was quite impossible to divide it on the basis of separating religious groups on one side or the other. They overlapped. So it was clearly understood that those communities which became the minority communities on this side or that must have the fullest protection and fullest security for their lives; otherwise, the whole structure which we had built up collapsed; the whole basis of it went.

Unfortunately, immediately after the partition, upheavals took place in north India and Pakistan—upheavals of a magnitude and inhuman nature which none

16. In Sri Lanka, qualifications for citizenship were unduly stringent so as to exclude many Indians who had lived in that country for many years. The Government of India on this subject had carried on protracted negotiations with the Government of Sri Lanka but no agreement had been reached.

of us could have imagined in his wildest moments. I am not going into that except to say that those upheavals resulted in certain large-scale migrations, and tremendous burdens—not on us as a Government; of course, the burdens were there but they were infinitely small compared to the burdens on the millions who had been uprooted and who find it so difficult to find their roots again. All that happened, and we were overwhelmed by it and it came like a flood. It is all very well for people to tell us “why did you not think about it and prepare for it?” I do not know how any human being could have thought of it and prepared for it in that way. Anyhow, that occurred, and we made a great effort to stop it, to try to draw a line beyond which it should not go and again to find some kind of an equilibrium. In those initial days and months which were so full of tragedy, we had the great advantage of the presence of Mahatma Gandhi here and I do not know what would have happened had he not been present here in those days. But he left us, almost—I might perhaps say—as a consequence of those happenings and the passions that they had unleashed. So we sought for an equilibrium and sometimes we thought we were moving towards an equilibrium and sometimes not. We had thus far dealt with, you will remember, in a sense the West Punjab and the Frontier Province on the one side and the East Punjab and a bit of Delhi and certain areas on this side. In the Province of Sind and the Province of East Bengal or West Bengal nothing had happened, to begin with and we hoped that nothing much would happen.

But gradually we found that in the province of Sind, conditions were such as to make it a little difficult for the minority community to continue there, and there was almost a ceaseless stream from Sind—not so many major incidents—sometimes there were incidents,—but there was a ceaseless stream from Sind pouring into northern India till at last Sind became almost bereft of any minority community except for certain scheduled classes who remained there perforce, because they could not easily come away. Now, this gradual sweeping away or pushing out of the minority community from Sind made us very unhappy. It made us unhappy not only because of the fact that many people were upset and uprooted, but rather because we began to see that those forces—which we had fought in the past and which we had sought to neutralise and sought to overcome by all kinds of things including the partition and its consequences—that those forces were still at play and so it suddenly dawned upon us that we had paid very heavy price but what we had hoped to gain we had not gained, i.e., peace and equilibrium. And so this happened.

Meanwhile, on the other side, from East Bengal also the stream continued. Again, there were no major incidents in East Bengal or West Bengal, but the stream continued. Sometimes, it came almost in a flood; sometimes, it reduced itself to a trickle. In the course of the last two years or so, about 16 lakhs of people—a million and six hundred thousands, mind you—came over from East Bengal. Some people went from West Bengal to East Bengal also during that period. I have no figures, but I think their numbers were considerably less. May I tell the House

that during the last year and a half or two years, a possibility that has always frightened us has been any evil development of the situation as between East Bengal and West Bengal. It has frightened us because the numbers involved were so great, and the possible suffering involved might be so great. We discouraged in every possible way the migration of large numbers from one Bengal to the other. Unfortunately in spite of our discouragement, many came over in hundreds of thousands. Still, at one period it seemed to us that we had probably stopped that migration—it went down to a trickle almost. Then recent events happened in the last two months or so and brought that problem, which had been a kind of bogey—right in front of us and we have to face it and face it today.

Now, I shall deal with this Bengal problem slightly later. I will go back to some other problems as between Pakistan and us. There is the Kashmir problem. You will have seen that in regard to Kashmir, a certain resolution has been passed by the Security Council a few days ago.¹⁷ You will have noted what was said on behalf of India in regard to this resolution. We have accepted the basic part of this resolution. I would like you to read if you can find the time, the speeches of our Representative, Mr B.N. Rau—he has made two statements both of which refer back to that speech.¹⁸ Having accepted that basic thing, he has made it

17. This resolution of the Security Council of 14 March 1950 picked up the threads of the proposals of McNaughton and embodied them in a four-power resolution on 24 February 1950, the main provision of which, apart from the McNaughton proposals, included the following two important additions: (1) Both the parties were called upon to prepare and execute within five months a programme of demilitarization on the basis of the McNaughton proposals; (2) The U.N. mediator, who was to replace the Commission, could place before both Governments or the Security Council 'any suggestions' which, in his opinion, might contribute to a solution. He was to be appointed to supervise the scheme of demilitarization.
18. On 7 February 1950, B.N. Rau placed before the Security Council India's reasons for the rejection of the McNaughton proposals. In defiance of the U.N. resolutions, Pakistan had been creating obstacles for the plebiscite by sending troops into Kashmir, by extending her control to the northern areas, by building up the 'Azad' forces. The McNaughton proposals virtually approved aggression by allowing Pakistan to control the northern areas and completely ignored "the legal and moral aspects of the question." The proposals took no cognizance of the assurance given to India by the Commission. They eliminated the sovereignty of the state from "the areas on the other side of the ceasefire line"; they recognized the 'Azad' authorities; they allowed the consolidation of the occupied areas to be effected by Pakistani troops, to the detriment of the state; disarming and disbanding of the 'Azad' forces was neutralized by similar disbanding and disarming of the state forces and state militia; they dismissed India's claim to the northern areas. It was India's view that aggression ought to be undone before plebiscite could be held. The occupation of the northern areas, the building up of the 'Azad' forces, and the presence of Pakistani troops were all acts of aggression.

perfectly clear that certain implications of McNaughton's formula were not accepted by us—certain matters relating to the so-called 'Azad Kashmir' forces and the northern areas about which we have made it perfectly clear at every stage that we could not accept any other position than the one we have put forward; they have again been emphasised. Also, we have emphasised in our reply to the Security Council the basic moral and legal factors which we think govern the situation and to which especially the moral factor, we attach great importance. So we have accepted the resolution making this position of ours quite clear. And if a mediator comes he will naturally be a mediator and we shall help him in every way and explain to him what our position is.

Basically, of course, whether it is India or whether it is Pakistan quite apart from law, ultimately the future of Kashmir must necessarily depend upon the wishes of the people of Kashmir. We went to Kashmir, in the first instance, because of the invitation that came to us not so much from the Maharaja's Government—that came of course and that was a formal and legal invitation from the constituted authority of the day—but what impressed us much more and what induced us to go was the invitation from the representatives of the people there and we have remained there all this time because of that. So that is where the Kashmir matter stands and I want to make it perfectly clear to this House and to others that in regard to this matter the basic position that was taken up by our Representative in the Security Council on this occasion is the final position for us from which there can be no moving.

There are other matters as between Pakistan and us—important matters. There is the question of canal waters—evacuee property and the other question with which my Honourable colleague, the Finance Minister, is so much concerned, devaluation. Well, so far as devaluation is concerned that is my Honourable colleague's subject and he has dealt with it on many occasions. The other matters, evacuee property and canal waters are essentially questions which when they arise between two Governments should be considered on expert level—if you like on the judicial level, if you like on the arbitral level. Such questions are normally dealt with like that and however important they may be they should never give rise to any major conflict between two countries. So far as canal waters are concerned, we have repeatedly suggested a technical commission where engineers on both sides can determine how best to use the waters that are there, how best to add to their utility and if ultimately there is some lack of water—which our engineers think there will not be—well, then there are more sources that can be tapped. The way of

approach should not be for either country to starve the other, but to make the best use of the available water by both.¹⁹

Now, it is a fact that in the old allocation of canals, etc., the old Punjab Government as a matter of priority, if you like because they could not spread themselves out all over, started first with what is now more or less, the Western Punjab. East Punjab was slightly neglected; East Punjab was second on the list to be provided for later. Now, when the partition came the result is that much of the water goes to the West Punjab and East Punjab does not get much of it; nor does she get a fair share of the canals. If you build the canals as we must, a fair allocation has to take place and therefore some kind of an agreement was arrived at on the 4th or 5th of May 1948. Quite apart from legal claims, both the parties tried their best to adjust themselves, so that East Punjab might have more water, though not at the cost of any other place, and that time should be given so that adjustments can be made in a few years. So that it is eminently a question which can be decided without passion to the advantage of both countries and the first thing about it is a technical examination by both. If there are any matters which cannot be decided after the technical examination, we are perfectly prepared for an adjudication or a judicial decision. The Pakistan Government has been going on saying that you must agree here and now to this matter being referred to The Hague Court of International Law. Now, I have no objection to refer the matter to The Hague Court or any other court. But I do not think personally that The Hague Court is probably a suitable tribunal for this, because it will involve us in enormous and lengthy processes of litigation far away from us about canal waters here and decisions may be delayed and all kinds of difficulties might arise. The first thing I say is: before you talk about referring this matter to anybody, let us have this technical examination. It does not bind you; it does not bind me. We may agree 100 per cent; we may agree 80 per cent. Then only 20 per cent remains for us to talk about or to refer to. Anyhow we are perfectly prepared, as I said,

19. Water was allowed into Pakistan canals through canals and works in India early in May 1948 in accordance with the Inter-Dominion Agreement of 4 May 1948. In July 1948, at the Inter-Dominion Conference held at Lahore, Pakistan was allowed seven years' time to develop alternative sources of water supply. But in June 1949, Pakistan took a legalistic stand claiming the waters of the eastern rivers flowing to Pakistan as a downstream riparian and suggested that India should refer the matter to the International Court of Justice. Pakistan proposed, if India refused, to place the dispute before the Security Council. Large tracts of land in East Punjab were awaiting adequate facilities for irrigation, but at the same time, any abrupt diversion of waters from Pakistan's canals was ruled out as undesirable. India pressed at the Inter-Dominion Conference held in August 1949, for a joint survey of the water resources of the Indus basin as it was her conviction that Pakistan had enough waters in her own rivers to fill her canals instead of relying on supply from Indian sources. Such a survey would enable both the Governments to work out a formula for equitable distribution of waters between the two countries.

to submit this matter to adjudication or arbitration. But whether it is a judicial authority or arbitral authority which may itself be judicial, it should be something which can produce results fairly rapidly and not prolong the agony.

About evacuee property too, it is a matter eminently for judicial expert decision. Whatever the final decision might be, governmental or otherwise, there should be a proper enquiry and investigations. We should make enquiries so as to enable Government to consider them. If necessary I am prepared to submit this also to impartial arbitration or impartial judicial authority, as the case may be. But we must devise some means of doing it which could produce results within an appreciable time and does not take a long time to decide...

Now, before I go back to this new situation that has arisen in Bengal, may I remind the House that some time ago I made an offer to the Pakistan Government that we should both subscribe to a 'no-war' declaration on behalf of our Governments. The draft that we proposed was published in the press and the House is no doubt aware of it. It was a very simple draft. The answer of the Pakistan Government was rather complicated. They said: "Before we do this, we must devise means for settling every other problem that we have, whether it is Kashmir, whether it is devaluation, for all these matters something should be devised." I pointed out to them that it would be a very good thing if we could solve all our problems and that if we were to solve them, the first step should be taken. What I wanted was to create an atmosphere which would help in the solution of those problems. So we went on arguing and the last thing that has happened is the reply that came from the Prime Minister of Pakistan, making various proposals about the other problems also, how they should be tackled or what procedure should be laid down. Now, while this was happening, this eruption took place in East Bengal and West Bengal and I felt a certain element of unreality in my talking about these vague declarations, when we could not control the existing situation and when all these things were happening. So we dealt or we tried to deal with this particular situation and we are dealing with it now.

May I in this connection inform the House, because I am coming back freshly from Calcutta and West Bengal that insofar as any major incidents are concerned, there have been no major incidents in West or East Bengal during the last two or two and a half weeks. I say so, because the impression is created by some of our newspapers reciting old incidents, an impression is created that they are new incidents. In fact there have been no major incidents in either West or East Bengal during these two and a half weeks.

There were great many difficulties in the way of people coming away from East Bengal to West Bengal and most of those difficulties have been removed; some certificates were required of domicile or income-tax; they are not necessary now. Some other difficulties arose at the Customs at one time and to some extent even now, the difficulties may be there. They had to pass through four barriers. The Customs barrier was legitimate, again a police barrier, then the Ansar barrier

and then a barrier of common folk who called themselves 'Jana Gana' that is people who gathered together. To some extent the people passed through these four barriers and lost some of their belongings at each barrier. However, I think this is lessening greatly now. I visited day before yesterday a big camp at Ranaghat where these people are arriving daily—some arrived the day before yesterday and some earlier and they all arrived roughly about 10 or 12 days ago—and I had found that many of them have been able to bring a fair quantity of luggage with them, pots, pans, utensils, beddings and in some cases trunks. Obviously, there had been a relaxation in people bringing goods, because I saw this luggage with them. What they were deprived of was mostly, I think, hard cash, which was taken away or which went in the shape of some kind of bribe given to the various people who stopped them, so that they might bring other goods with them.

Pandit Maitra: So much of jewellery and ornaments?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I did see some women wearing gold bangles in the camps. Of course, I cannot say whether others, probably were taken away; they may have been, but, at any rate, some wore gold bangles; I saw one or two with necklaces in their necks in the last few days because the people were coming home in the last ten days or so.

Raj Bahadur: What is the average rate of daily arrivals at present?

JN: I could not give you the exact number, but I will tell you fairly approximately. In all, I should imagine since 13th of February about 150,000 persons have come from East Bengal, that is, Hindus from East Bengal to Calcutta and from the 13th of February about 100,000 Muslims have left Calcutta for East Bengal and daily this process is continuing. It is, therefore, not exactly a one-sided traffic; it is a two-sided thing, entirely voluntary, of course voluntary in the sense that there is a process of circumstances; people are not pushed out except by circumstance.

Now, I refer to East and West Bengal. As the House knows, early this month, roundabout the Holi period, there were disturbances and incidents in certain towns of U.P., a little later some incidents of this type in Bombay which I greatly deplore. A major disturbance took place in the Goalpara and Barpeta parts of Assam roundabout two weeks ago or a little less, that is, about 6th or 7th of March, where for two or three days there was an upheaval largely of the tribal folk there, who swept down and committed a good deal of arson and drove away a fairly large number of Muslim inhabitants of those areas into either Pakistan or the State of Cooch Behar nearby.

Prof. Ranga: How many might they possibly be?

JN: I cannot say, so far as I know, there was very little killing there but there was arson on a large scale. I cannot say how many were driven away, because figures vary from 30,000 to double or more than that number.

These problems obviously raise very important questions for us to answer. Some people talk excitedly about war, some people talk vaguely about exchange of

populations and all that and we have to consider every possible aspect of this problem. Now, exchange of populations is something which we have opposed all along. It is something which I consider completely, not only undesirable, but not feasible. It is a question of arithmetic, apart from anything else. If we wanted an exchange of population between East and West Bengal and if we did it with the complete cooperation of both the Governments on expert level and with every facility given, it is calculated that it would take five and a half years, that is to say, if no untoward event happened.

Of course, many untoward events will happen: of course there will not be such magnificent cooperation between the two Governments; and all kinds of upheavals will take place during that period, so that one cannot think of it in terms of reality. Then again, where do we draw the line? It goes on. At the same time there is no doubt that the present position is that so far as the Hindu population of East Bengal is concerned, one might say that generally speaking the entire population is frightened, is full of fear and apprehension about the future and, given the opportunity, would like to come away from East Bengal. Now, that is the picture. I do not know, of course, if, given an opportunity, all will ultimately come. That is their present feeling. All may not come. May be some people will stick to their lands and other things later. That will depend on the developing situation, whether they have security, etc. or not. Now, we thought that, quite apart from the larger considerations of the problem, immediately people should be allowed to come anyhow, especially people who are in danger, and that the door should be kept open for them to travel from one part of Bengal to the other. When we relieve the tension, that itself will result in lessening panic and giving a sense of little more security and they will be coming over with fair ease anyway. The limitation is really that there is no more transport available. Anything between 5,000 and 8,000 people come over daily. Sometimes 10,000 people a day. And between 5,000 and 6,000 Muslims have been going from Calcutta daily. On one day there were 14,000 Hindus coming in and 10,000 Muslims going out. So, the number varies. They come chiefly by train; some come by steamer and about five hundred people a day either way by air too.

Now, in this connection it was suggested that some kind of joint statement might be made by Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and myself to meet the immediate situation of panic and danger, to prevent incidents from happening and to allow those who wanted to come away. Now, we do not want and I do not wish to encourage mass migration, partly because we just physically could not organise it, and partly because it would mean for some period people suffering all kinds of hardship without being able to come, but nevertheless we felt it quite important that full facilities under adequate protection should be given to them to come, and so it is proposed for that limited purpose that a kind of joint statement should be made which, to begin with, naturally would lay down that each Government was fully responsible for giving security and protection to its minorities; secondly, that the guilty should

be punished; thirdly, that those who have suffered must be helped in every way, rehabilitated and compensated; fourthly, that an intensified search should be made for looted property and that those persons found in possession of it and who have not voluntarily returned it would be considered guilty of having looted it and, punished accordingly. Then there is a reference to the abduction of women and to forced conversions; that forced conversions will not be recognised and that every attempt will be made to recover women who might have been abducted. And finally there is to be reference to the punishing of people who spread wild rumours and false stories which add to this tension, and this related to newspapers also.

Mohanlal Gautam: What about *Dawn*? Would it be punished by Pakistan?

JN: *Dawn* is a paper which is published in Karachi and Lahore!...

I am taking the House into my confidence as to certain things that we have discussed—Mr Liaquat Ali Khan and I. Now, there is also a suggestion about some kind of a committee of enquiry in each place to go into all these things, presided over by a High Court Judge and also with a representative of the minorities. Now, obviously, this statement, if it was to be made, would have no great bearing on the major problem. The major problem remains. This is something to meet the immediate situation and to allow people to come away under proper protection, to relieve tension and to prevent big accidents from happening. As a matter of fact, most of the things contained in that statement have been declared separately by the parties concerned.

My Honourable friend over there referred to *Dawn* and other papers. Well, it is not for me to say that, but what the Pakistan newspapers contain is something amazing; it is astonishing the way they publish libellous things. May I add, however, in this connection that on the last occasion when I referred to this matter in this House, I congratulated the Indian press, but I am unable to congratulate it again today on its restraint, because it has not shown any restraint in the last few days, or a week or two. I recognise the provocation and all that, but the fact is that it has not shown any restraint...

Renuka Ray: Is it anything comparable to the Pakistan press?

JN: I agree. I am really astonished at the way the Pakistan press is behaving...

I made this reference in all solemnity and seriousness, because I have been watching them and I have seen what passions have been aroused because of what the press has written. I am quite prepared to admit and one can understand that there has been provocation, but I am stating this as a fact. I am not comparing the Pakistan press with the Indian press, but the fact is that the press has contained headlines, banner headlines, etc., which have excited people. I am not saying that facts should not be published, but it is a question of how the facts have been

published. I may refer to one of the best newspapers in India, *The Hindu*, and the same facts had been published in *The Hindu* as in some other papers, but it is all a question of the manner of doing it...

May I also suggest to you that it is a fantastic proposition for a newspaper to have a Gallup poll on war.²⁰ It is a fantastic thing to go about doing that. It is an incitement. We may have war or we may not have war, but if newspapers take the formulation of high policy in their hands in this way, then we might be led to all manner of things.

Durgabai: Sir, we are anxious to know whether the terms which were discussed between our Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Pakistan were agreed to or not. Will any statement be made on that and if so, when?

An Honourable Member: Will it be carried out?

JN: The main point is this. As the Honourable Member said, will it be carried out or not? We discussed these and you will find that some are stated by the Governor General of Pakistan and by others. If you read their statements they declare all those things. I cannot guarantee as to how far anything will be carried out; but we did not think of it in terms of something that we could be assured that it will be carried out because, in the nature of things, this was thought of in terms of meeting an immediate situation, not of solving the main problem. The problem is too difficult and vital for us and it cannot be solved by a declaration like this. You must not mix up these two things. It was meant particularly to open the door for people to come and go and a certain toning down of the fear and apprehension that existed and then face this problem in its entirety.

Now the real problem, if I may come back, is a very vital one. I was telling you that we were discussing the 'no-war' declaration with Pakistan when all these things occurred and it seemed to me fantastic to talk about 'no-war' when something that seemed to me worse than war was occurring. It became rather farcical. So we have to consider it in all its aspects. I shall put it to you quite frankly. Whatever policy we have to pursue in the future must depend necessarily, largely on what happens in Pakistan, partly of course on what happens in India because essentially it cannot be formulated in theory apart from events and facts that are happening. If there is a grave danger to the minorities in Pakistan it is quite impossible for us to remain calm and look on. There is that potential danger today. One does not know what might happen at any time. There have been no incidents but there is that potential danger and one has to take such steps as are possible to prevent anything happening. Ultimately, after all, protection in Pakistan can only be given obviously by Pakistan. We cannot give protection in Pakistan. One country can

20. *Amrita Bazar Patrika* carried out a Gallup poll on whether India should go to war with Pakistan and on that basis demanded that Nehru declare war on Pakistan.

give protection to its nationals only within its territory. The only other alternative is to take the other country into its possession if it wants to give protection in the other country. So there are so many factors and it is quite clear that no position can be tolerated in the future where minorities have not got adequate and sufficient protection and security. While we make this position clear to Pakistan, we have to make this clear for ourselves too. For on us falls the greater responsibility in a sense than on Pakistan. So far as Pakistan is concerned, it is a policy you might say, which was agreed to as the basis of partition which is natural, which is human, which is understood but which does not necessarily follow from the policy of the State that they have, that is the policy of an Islamic State. Protection might follow but equal treatment does not follow. So far as we are concerned, our very theory of State, our old practice or background compels us to follow a humanitarian policy, apart from other reasons so that on us the burden is in a sense greater because we have to put an end to everything we have stood for in the past if we slide in the slightest degree from that position. I myself am not prepared to move an iota from the position we have held in the past.

M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Is it part of the agreement with them that theirs should be an Islamic State?

JN: It is unfortunately a fact that they are such a State. It is not for us to interfere in what kind of State any other country has. But we cannot help being affected by events and by people living in Pakistan with whom we have been intimately connected in the past, and with whom we are still connected today. So we have to recognize that. People who are living in Pakistan and the people who are living in India are intimately connected not only by bonds of history, not only by economic bonds but also family relationship and the rest, and it is quite impossible for anybody to say legally or internationally it is a new State, etc. Then apart from that you have the effects of that. What happens in Pakistan affects India and we cannot help it. Therefore this problem cannot be solved as between two States and these facts will have to be considered, and we have arrived at a position when we cannot possibly tolerate for practical reasons, apart from sentimental and other reasons a continuation of any suppression of minorities or lack of security of minorities. We allow the minorities to come and go and we have an open door policy even facilitating their coming and going but it is obvious that this does not solve the problem because this may go on for the next ten years and still not exhaust the problem. We are not going to wait for that. A solution must come soon. If anything comes in the way of solution, it has to be removed. Naturally, I cannot go into any further details about this particular matter at this stage. It is a highly difficult matter but I should like to make two or three points clear. First of all, the minorities in East Bengal are certainly our concern to the extent that they have security and if they do not have security, measures will have to be devised to give

them security. We do not want a mass exodus or an exchange of population but we are going to keep the door open for those who want to come or travel in either way and give them facilities and we will give them as much help as possible. This is the basic position and for the rest we have to be prepared for all contingencies and developments and take such action as necessity compels us to....

.... I am loath to take up more time of the House, but I feel I owe it to the House and to myself to say a few words, more or less in elucidation of what I said, more especially because an Honourable Member of this House, Mr Lakshmi Kanta Maitra, spoke in terms of high emotion and excitement and righteous indignation about what I had said. Now, right at the beginning, may I make it perfectly clear that I have no complaint against Mr Lakshmi Kanta Maitra? Secondly, being myself occasionally liable to high emotion and righteous indignation, I appreciate it in others. Nevertheless, I feel that he applied his indignation and emotion in a wrong direction, if I may say so, today. Or, perhaps, I was not fortunate enough to explain my point of view sufficiently clearly, because I was not dealing, and I could not deal, with the many varieties or aspects of the East Bengal situation that has been dealt with previously and that will be dealt with subsequently, in my wider survey I had to deal with Pakistan. It was important, because the fact of the matter is that both in our domestic politics and in our international politics, Pakistan, or our relations or absence of relations with Pakistan, play an important part, and in dealing with Pakistan I had to deal with some other matters like Kashmir and more especially towards the end with the Bengal situation.

Mr Lakshmi Kanta Maitra spoke with emotion about what had happened in East Bengal and of the numerous letters and other messages he had received about the sufferings and the indignities that people had suffered there. Now, I may not have access to all the sources of knowledge of Mr Lakshmi Kanta Maitra, but I have sufficient access to many sources of the horrors that had happened there and because of that and because of the reaction they produce in my mind I have to be very careful. I happen to hold a responsible position and any decisions of mine are not merely expressions of opinion but they may be translated into action. Therefore, because I am liable to emotion, excitement and indignation I see to it that at this moment I am not led away by emotion, excitement or indignation. Though normally I would not lighten the rein, I would allow myself to go, I dare not, because the responsibility and the consequences are too grave. That does not mean that I am not aware of what has happened; it is because of the very nature of the crisis, the depth of it and the far-reaching consequences that flow from it in any direction that I hesitate to speak in language which is not restrained.

Now, the whole line of my argument, if I may say so, was this. I pointed out that in recent months there has been a certain flow of refugees. I referred to a certain declaration, whether it will be made or not, I do not know, it depends upon other factors. The other party has been repeating what we have been saying—whether they put it into practice or not is another matter. In fact to some extent it had been

given effect to now. That is my point. What Mr Lakshmi Kanta Maitra said was perfectly true and yet what I said was also perfectly true. That is to say all those things have happened, but for the present things are not happening. Whether they will happen tomorrow or not is another matter. Now, in passing I tried to put before you what the present position was.

Secondly, I referred, and I should like to make that clear, to newspapers. What I said was—if I may remind the House—that I cannot congratulate the newspapers as I did previously. First of all I was obviously referring to a few—I am coming from Calcutta and I was referring to a few papers in Calcutta, which I would rather not mention now. I also said that I can understand their excitement and perhaps their lack of restraint. But, nevertheless, the occasion demands restraint whatever the provocation.

Now the main burden of my argument was this: that in the whole course of the last two and a half years' history, and I mentioned if you will remember what happened in Sind after the Punjab occurrences and what happened in East Bengal during the last two years or more, there was a certain process of, shall we call it squeezing out which occurs and has occurred. Some people say it is deliberate, planned etc. Some people say it is not deliberate at the top but is so somewhere in the bottom or the middle. Whatever that may be, the main thing as it appears to me is this that in the very conception of the State the Pakistan Government has given a certain inferior status to those who do not fit in, who do not belong to the majority community and as a consequence of the other happenings and past history it gives them all the time a certain sense of insecurity, quite apart from special happenings. And when there is this widespread sense of insecurity and any special occurrence takes place, then immediately it becomes much greater insecurity and danger, because they live in a certain atmosphere of suppression and it is because of this that it is transformed into a dangerous situation which otherwise it would not be—otherwise it would be a local incident. Now that is the problem.

The second thing which I ventured to say to the House in sufficiently clear language, I think, was this, that whatever the normal responsibilities of a State might be to other States or people in other States there is a peculiar relationship between the people in India and the people in Pakistan. I mentioned in this connection our own old colleagues in the Frontier Province. I mentioned very specially in this connection those who are in Eastern Bengal and I said we could not rid ourselves of the feeling we have for them or the ultimate responsibility. Therefore, it came to this. The problem before us is this. We owe it to those people in East Bengal who may be in danger, we owe it to them, to give them protection, to give them protection in our own territory or to give them protection in their territory, if there is no other way, if circumstances demand it. Now it is patent that the kind of protection that they can get in their territory can only come to them in the existing state of affairs through the Government that controls that territory. There is no other way. Whether you like it or not, trust its word or not,

that Government functions according to its own wishes plus also according to the circumstances in which it is placed and by other events, whatever they may be. It may be friendly pressure; it may be more than friendly pressure from us or whatever it may be. It functions; you have to function through that Government. Suppose we make a declaration. You may be right in saying "How can you trust in one's word?" In the final analysis the word of countries is only trusted to the extent that it no longer makes them change that word or the consequences of breaking that word are not liked, that is the ultimate sanction behind trusting the word of a country in major matters; in any event whether you trust it or not, so long as there is a Government dealing with a situation, you have to deal through that Government. You cannot ignore it. If that word is given, you may trust it or not, it has a certain value again of two kinds. One is a positive value because whether you trust it or not, it has an effect on its own people and other people. Secondly, it becomes a first step to the second step that may be necessary or a third step. It is not good enough as my Honourable friend Mr Hanumanthaiya²¹ talked about an exchange of population, and with all deference to him, I may say if he had given more thought to the problem, he would not have spoken as he has done. It is an approach completely lacking in intelligent thought. I was amazed that any one should talk such utter nonsense as he did, in this matter, and I am sorry to use these words, but it is too serious a matter for people to talk nonsense about...

Now the position before us is that any solution like what was suggested is not a solution because in the best of circumstances, it takes half a generation or a quarter of a generation. Anything that takes ten years or eight years is no solution of the immediate problem. We have to deal, it is true, with basic problems. That cannot be challenged and it is not imaginary. The solution simply keeps you at the boiling point for years and we cannot survive and no country can survive at boiling point year after year. Therefore, it is not a solution. It may be, of course, that we have kept the door open and people come and people go; let them come and it is up to us to arrange for them, but even so, however fast they come, the fact remains that large numbers remain behind and those who remain behind are to have a sense of responsibility and we will not tolerate any danger coming to them, whether they are there or on the other side. That is the only possible way if I may say so and how to do it, when to do it and in what manner to do it is quite another matter. It is not an easy matter to decide. But merely to say get them over and spend the

21. K. Hanumanthaiya (1908-1980); was imprisoned several times during freedom struggle; Member, Constituent Assembly and Provisional Parliament; Chief Minister, Mysore State, 1952-56; member and later chairman, Administrative Reforms Commission, Government of India, 1967-70; member, Lok Sabha, 1962-67, 1967-70, 1971-77; Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in Parliament, 1967-68; member, Congress Working Committee, 1969-70; Minister of Law and Social Welfare, Government of India, June 1970-71; Minister of Railways, March 1971-July 1972.

next ten years over the process is not correct. During these ten years all kinds of disasters will happen and dangers will happen because the moment you decide this quite apart from completing overhauling and changing your past policy and your principles; the curious thing is that from that moment that danger increases, they are aliens and they have no rights; they are just waiting year after year to go over to the other side and they have no other right except bare protection and nothing else. Having created the aliens with rights of living for a few years till transport is arranged for this is not a very happy solution of the problem. Ultimately then I can honestly confess to you if it was such an easy matter we could go ahead but we have to watch step by step and in so doing we have to keep our heads and emotions, and howsoever we may feel this is a serious matter affecting not only our kith and kin today but generations and may be the whole future of India. It is a terrible responsibility.

I spoke this morning about the hydrogen bomb and I said there is something which will destroy mankind and it amazes one that people should talk over it. I have felt for some time that the hydrogen bomb, very bad as it is, is preferable to the kind of things we have seen and heard of in recent months and weeks. It is preferable. It destroys utterly if the world is not found to be decent. Let it be destroyed but let us not continue living as brute beasts, sinking to lower levels than that of brute beasts. That is a challenge to the generation, a challenge to this House and to this Government. Are you going to fight the spread of beastliness and lack of civilization and barbarism that is coming over? And if it spreads we have to fight it and you cannot avoid it. You cannot fight evil by evil; you cannot fight barbarism by barbarism. You have to take up a civilized position and fight it with all your might.

Therefore, I venture to put to this House that in feeling strongly as we must and in realising our responsibility, to the people of East Bengal, we must always try to find ways and means which are civilized, which adhere to the ideals we have held because otherwise they lose their value and even from the purely opportunist point of view, we go to pieces. It is from that point of view I ventured to say something...

FOREIGN POLICY

II. Burma

1. To Thakin Nu¹

New Delhi
December 1, 1949

My dear Thakin Nu,

I have just received your letter of the 25th November² for which I thank you. It is always a pleasure to hear from you. I have not myself written to you for some time past. But you have often been in my thoughts. Indeed there are so many matters of common concern to India and Burma that inevitably we have to think of each other.³ Recent developments on the China side have made it even more necessary for us to consult each other from time to time.

I am writing to you immediately in answer to your letter. I may have to write further again about one or two matters which you have mentioned. I am very happy to learn of the improvement in the conditions in Burma.⁴ I have been following this improvement⁵ both in the daily press and from the despatches of our Ambassador in Rangoon.⁶ I earnestly hope that this improvement will continue and will gain speed so that your Government might devote itself to the peaceful progress of Burma.

Regarding the recognition of Communist China, we have already told you that we shall keep you fully informed of any step that we might take. There appears to be almost general agreement that the government of Communist China must be recognised. Indeed, there is not much choice left in the matter and the facts of the situation lead us only to one conclusion. The United States of America are somewhat reluctant to take any step just yet in that direction, chiefly because they

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Thakin Nu had congratulated Nehru on the outstanding success of his U.S. visit, apprised him of the latest situation in Burma, discussed the question of recognition of China by Burma and the possibility of an India-Pakistan-Burma defence pact.

3. The Indian Government considered it important to strengthen Thakin Nu's Government against the insurgents. Apart from obligations of friendship, as a result of the disturbances within Burma in 1948 and 1949 India was denied her usual share of rice imports from that country during 1948-50. One third of Burma's export and half of her import trade was carried on with India. There was also a sizable Indian population in Burma.

4. Thakin Nu had written that in the Deltas, one of the most stubborn strongholds of the Karen insurgents, Yandoon, had been recaptured by the Government forces. The capital of the Shan State, Taunggyi, had also been retaken. Thakin Nu had expressed gratitude for the moral and material support received from India.

5. Thakin Nu replied on 5 January 1950 that in addition to having well-trained armed forces equipped to meet the possibility of frontier raids and guerilla activities, Burma should have frontier garrisons posted at places of tactical importance along the long frontier line. He had written, "We have no territorial ambitions, as you well know; but we feel that strength is the best preventive of peace."

6. M.A. Rauf.

have been greatly irritated by the treatment accorded to their Consul and Vice-Consul in Mukden by the communist authorities. Our present intention is to take this step of recognition sometime in the second half of December. We are in constant communication with other Governments about it. Our decision does not depend upon the decision of other Governments, but it is obviously desirable not to function in isolation and to have as much general support as possible. I might mention that it is partly due to India's attitude in this matter that the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments have veered round to a recognition at a later stage. I have had full discussion on this issue in Washington and London. I shall keep you fully informed as it is certainly desirable that Burma and India should act more or less in concert in this matter.

As regards the question of a defence pact between Pakistan and Burma,⁷ the proposal is obviously worth considering and we would be happy to come forward with it. But the fact remains that unfortunately our relations with Pakistan are very strained not only because of Kashmir but because of other issues also. I have repeatedly stated in public as well as otherwise that we should make it clear that all issues between India and Pakistan should be settled peacefully. I have had no response to that from Pakistan. Indeed, the Pakistan Press continually talks of war and some of their leading members of Government also refer to war and prepare for it. This is hardly the background to talk of a defence pact.

There is another important consideration. There has been a good deal of talk about some kind of a Pacific or South East Asia pact. You will remember that the President of the Philippines referred to this some time ago. Obviously this pact is based on building up some kind of a front against communist advance in South East Asia.⁸ I have been of opinion that any such move would not only be futile but injurious. I need not go into the reasons here. Any attempt to have a pact between Burma, Pakistan and India at this particular moment might be construed as some kind of first step to this larger arrangement.

I have no objection at all to your Minister discussing the matter with Pakistan's Foreign Minister and indeed I would be glad if we could settle our problems with Pakistan. But I have pointed out to you the obvious difficulties.

7. Thakin Nu felt that to stand in isolation in those difficult days was to invite danger. "I am convinced that if only India, Ceylon and Pakistan will enter into a pact with Burma for mutual aid or defence in case of aggression or of encroachment on their sovereign integrity, the danger either from external infiltration or from those enemies inside the Union who are prepared to sell their own country into bondage on the chance of their stepping into power can be easily combated."
8. The Governments of the Philippines, Thailand and Sri Lanka considered that the threat to their independence came largely from the communists—both internal and external. They were thus interested in allying themselves with the powerful western nations to protect their interests.

As regards the Zeyawaddy Sugar Factory, I shall write to you again after consulting my advisers.⁹

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. As Zeyawaddy Sugar Factory was in an area still controlled by insurgents, Thakin Nu had given an undertaking to bring in Gurkha armed guards to protect the factory. But his Cabinet colleagues disagreed with this on the ground that once this precedent was made, other foreign companies like Burma Oil Company and Burma Corporation, would also ask for the same privilege. Thakin Nu had explained this situation to the general manager of the sugar factory.

2. To Thakin Nu¹

New Delhi
7 January, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

Your letter of the 5th January was handed to me this evening and I have naturally read it with the greatest care. I agree with a great deal that you have written in appraising the situation. I do not think there is any danger of what might be called war-like activities from China directed to any other country. There may be infiltration of Chinese communists into adjoining territories. I do not think even this is likely to take the form of sporadic fighting. It is much more likely to be propagandist and agitational.²

The establishment of the new regime in China following a major revolution, is obviously of the greatest significance to Asia and the world.³ It is indeed a world event of the first magnitude. The mere formation of a new Government, even a communist Government, would by itself not necessarily have had this significance. But something of much deeper import has happened among the millions of people in China. The great majority of them are certainly not communists. But

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Thakin Nu concurred with Nehru that there was no immediate danger of any open war-like activities from China as it would give rise to serious international problems with serious repercussions which even Soviet Union would not be prepared to risk.
3. The success of the communist forces was so marked that by 1 October 1949 it was possible for Mao Tse-tung to proclaim the creation of the Chinese People's Republic and the establishment of the Central People's Government. He was subsequently elected Chairman of the Government.

I think it is true to say that they have supported the communists. This support has been given chiefly because of a succession of mistakes by the Kuomintang Government and by their fading out of the picture even before the communists took possession of a good part of China. There are few examples in history of a government and a system having completely outlived its day as the Nationalist Government in China did. On the other hand the communist leaders of China are exceedingly able and experienced men. Such reports as we have received about them since they took possession of Shanghai indicate their ability to deal effectively with current problems.

There is no doubt that these leaders are hundred per cent communists. At the same time they have never forgotten the Chinese background and the social environment which surrounds them. While they talk in terms of full communism, in practice they have a relatively moderate programme.⁴ Their Government is some kind of a coalition Government though the control is entirely that of the communists. The fact that they have got Madame Sun Yat-sen as a senior Vice-President strengthens them considerably.⁵ This Chinese Government has to face enormous problems. China has had some kind of a civil war for the last thirty-five years and is in a bad condition. And yet, from all reports it appears that the communist Government is likely to advance with fair rapidity on the economic plane. They have a well developed industrial base in Manchuria. Some competent observers from America told me that they expected China to make good economically within five years' time.

Our policy towards China has to be clear and definite and not half-hearted. It must either be governed by a friendly approach or a hostile approach. Of course, however friendly we may be outwardly, there are inner conflicts and frictions and suspicion of each other. It has seemed clear to me for some months past that a hostile approach to the new Government in China would be exceedingly bad policy. The injury to that Government would be relatively little. But the injury to neighbouring countries and to world peace would be considerable. As a result of this line of thought I felt that the new Chinese Government must be recognised. I argued on this basis in London and Washington and I believe it produced some impression. If we recognise China, then we should do it in as normal and friendly a way as possible and not mar that recognition with unfriendliness. Friendliness of course does not mean weakness. My approach, therefore, is completely friendly. I do not wish to interfere with China in any way, nor do I wish to line up with

4. Mao Tse-tung had elaborated a programme of what he called New Democracy.

5. Madam Sun Yat-sen, the widow of the founder of the Chinese Republic and a prominent figure in Chinese public life, welcomed the victory of the communists. She said: "This is the greatest era in the life of the Chinese People."

any enemies of China. At the same time I do not propose to give in to any demand which I consider improper.

There is not much danger of any Chinese aggression across the Indian border. But I want to make it quite clear, if occasion arises, that the slightest attempt at such aggression whether in India or Nepal would be stoutly resisted by us.

A consequence of this general policy is that we must avoid building up of any kind of anti-China or anti-communist bloc. That would be a hostile act which would lead to undesirable consequences. It was for this reason that I have not encouraged the Philippines Government when they talked about a South East Asia Conference. I have no objection to a South East Asia Conference, but in the present context it did seem an anti-Chinese affair.

I entirely agree with you that you must protect your frontiers as well as protect the internal situation from any communist attempts at disorder. I am not afraid of any armed raids across the frontier or of a concentration of armed forces across the border. That is not likely to happen. But infiltration there might well be and this should be prevented.

Your suggestion about a defence pact between India, Burma, Ceylon and Pakistan, in the present context, appears to me not likely to yield any helpful results.⁶ It might indeed worsen the situation. Inevitably, China will think it is aimed against her and cold war will begin and there might well be trouble at the frontiers. Pacts as such in such circumstances do not help. It is a common understanding and common purpose that count.

So far as we are concerned in India we have repeatedly declared that we will not enter into any military commitments or pacts of this kind. We have felt that the division of the world into hostile groups adds to the dangers of the situation. A pact of this kind will probably make the Chinese southern frontiers more insecure and tension would rise.

Then again any kind of a military pact between the countries you have mentioned would have little military or economic value. None of these countries is in a position to do anything in a big way. All they can do is to defend their own frontiers if attacked, and to help each other diplomatically. That should be done. In a military and financial sense, all these countries are weak and such strength as they have can only be exercised in the diplomatic field as well as in the conviction of other countries that any invasion of their territories will be stoutly resisted.

6. Thakin Nu had instructed one of his colleagues to explore the possibilities of an India-Pakistan-Burma defence pact and contact Nehru and Zafrullah Khan in Washington. He had reported that Pakistan would be a willing partner. Thakin Nu suggested that if there was a prospect of making headway in this matter, the preliminary conversations should be held at New Delhi.

From the point of view of Burma more specially, I would earnestly suggest to you that a pact of this kind is rather dangerous. It would put an end immediately to the policy of developing contacts with China and thus inducing them to keep within their own limits and restrain themselves. It is true that there is a potential and perhaps even an actual menace to Burma and to some other countries. That menace has to be met by each country strengthening itself and by all of them having a common understanding and some measure of cooperation. The next few months are critical in many ways and we have to see how China develops internally and externally. Any action of hostile nature taken by us would drive China completely into the hostile ring of the Soviets. China is too big and important merely to be a satellite of the Soviet. But a wrong action may push her in that direction.

The fact is that in military and financial sense the only country that can give adequate help to any other country is the U.S.A. To a little extent the United Kingdom Government might also do it, but even their resources are not great. Other countries do not count from this point of view. They do count from the point of view of giving a lot of trouble if they are attacked in any way and helping or hindering in the diplomatic field. So far as the Commonwealth is concerned it is the U.K. that has some capacity to help financially or otherwise. The capacity of other countries is very strictly limited.

Your examples of Greece and Yugoslavia are not wholly applicable.⁷ Greece⁸ has been practically run by the Americans and it is doubtful what would happen there, once the Americans went away. Yugoslavia is certainly a strong country and will not easily be subdued.⁹ But if help as in the case of Greece is given in South East Asia, that is much more likely to become a theatre of war or at least of extreme tension. Under certain circumstances help may be necessary and should be given. But to begin by doing something which upsets the apple-cart and then try to restore it to its normal position is not a safe way of proceeding.

Regarding the nature of aid and terms and conditions, as you know the matter has been discussed for some time and something has emerged out of those discussions. Some Commonwealth Ambassadors in Rangoon are constantly seized of this matter. Here again, it is the U.K. Government, among the Commonwealth Governments, that can furnish adequate aid financially. I believe they are agreeable

7. Thakin Nu needed financial assistance for defence and had requested Nehru to consider "if the Commonwealth should not be advised to render us assistance just as United Kingdom and United States of America did in Yugoslavia or in Greece."
8. Communist guerrilla forces in Greece waged a civil war with the right-wing Populist Party in 1946-47. With British and later American assistance the revolt was crushed by 1949.
9. The allegiance of Yugoslavia to the U.S.S.R. was broken in 1948, when Marshal Tito refused to accept the supremacy of Stalin and the Soviet Union. Following this rift Yugoslavia received financial and political assistance from the western countries. Later Yugoslavia, though not a Balkan State, joined the Balkan Pact which provided for military assistance in case of unprovoked foreign attacks.

to doing so. We can at best join in. I do not know how far this matter has proceeded but it can be and should be finalised soon. You will remember that the U.K. Government withdrew from Greece and it is very reluctant to get caught anywhere else. They have their own troubles in Malaya and the question of Hong Kong may also become a big one.

All these questions really overlap and affect each other and therefore it is necessary for us to keep in close touch with one another and to help to coordinate our activities.

I am going to Colombo early tomorrow morning. I am afraid I cannot stay there very long and have to be back in Delhi on the 15th night. But I shall certainly discuss with others the new situation in South East Asia and, more specially, the situation in Burma and what should be done. Now that I am in possession of your mind on this subject, I shall find out how others react to it.

I need hardly assure you of my earnest desire to be of help to Burma. But apart from this, I am convinced that in the interests of India it is essential for your Government to become stronger and for you to put down all rebellious elements. It is with this viewpoint that I have approached this question and I feel that any bellicose act on our part should be avoided, for it is bound to lead to trouble.

I was happy to learn that the situation in Burma continues to improve.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. To Thakin Nu¹

New Delhi
January 31, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

Very many thanks for your letter of the 25th January which has just reached me. I am glad that, on further consideration, you have come to the same conclusion as ourselves, namely that to have a sort of defence pact at this juncture is liable to be misunderstood. This is another example of how India and Burma can work together...²

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection. Extract.
2. Thakin Nu had written that he had not thought of the possibility of "our working together with understanding in matters of common interest. That is why I suggested to have a sort of defence pact. Such a pact at this juncture, is liable to be misunderstood as an anti-communist China pact. It might really make the situation worse." He thanked Nehru for his advice.

4. To Thakin Nu¹

New Delhi
March 22, 1950

My dear Thakin Nu,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 7th March 1950. You will forgive me for the slight delay in answering it. I wanted to acquaint myself with the facts before I sent you an answer.

I am glad that you have written to me so frankly on this subject. I am sorry that our decision to reduce the purchase of rice from your country has been misunderstood. Our Ambassador in Rangoon has fully explained our position to you and to the other authorities in Burma. I need hardly tell you of our sympathy for your country and of our ardent desire to help you in every way. We have admired your leadership in moments of grave crisis and it is a great pleasure to learn of recent developments in Burma which have been so favourable to your Government. I hope that these are the prelude to a full victory and to the establishment of normal conditions in Burma.

As you know, we are going through a very severe financial crisis, which is straining our resources to the utmost. Nevertheless, we readily agreed to participate in the Commonwealth short-term loan to Burma, of which our share is one million pounds. As you must also be aware, we have not yet pressed for the repayment of the separation debt of Rs. 60 crores which Burma owes to us.²

May I make it clear that there has not been the slightest suggestion, so far as I know, that your Government is trying to profiteer at the expense of the Government of India. This suggestion must have been made by some person or persons with a view to creating misunderstanding between your country and mine. We know your difficulties very well and fully appreciate your desire to overcome them.

The food deficit that we have suffered during the past few years has been a burden on us, which has almost become intolerable. We have had to pay vast sums of money, and foreign exchange at that, to import rice and wheat from abroad. We have had to subsidise this in our own country. The result has been that we have had to stop or delay a large number of our most important development schemes. Because of this, we came to the conclusion some months ago that we must become self-sufficient in food. For this we have fixed a date—the end of 1951. This is no easy task, but we made it priority No. 1 for us and devoted all our energy to food production and to avoidance of waste of all kinds. Unfortunately we had bad seasons and floods and other natural disasters made our position worse. In spite of this, we are determined to achieve our goal of food sufficiency by 1951.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Burma was separated from India when the Government of Burma Act of 1935 came into force in April 1937.

On the whole we are making good progress to that end. If we are to stop food imports by 1951, we have to reduce them proportionately during these two years. We have in fact reduced them greatly this year. We decided that rice imports should be reduced more than wheat imports to begin with, because rice cost us more. That was the reason why we fixed a maximum figure of 100,000 tons of rice for import during the current year.

To add to our other difficulties, devaluation has added to the price of many of the commodities that we import. Pakistan did not devalue her currency and therefore has actually to pay less. This policy of Pakistan was and is, we think, gravely detrimental to her economy and this has led to grave economic conflicts between India and Pakistan. Nevertheless, for the present, she has to pay less in terms of her currency.

I have put before you frankly what our position is. In spite of these difficulties, we certainly hope to buy rice from you and even to increase the import quota of rice which we had previously fixed. We would very much like you to adhere to last year's price, but if this is not at all possible, we shall try our utmost to meet your wishes even in regard to a slight increase. I earnestly trust however that this increase, if any, will be as slight as possible.

I am asking our Food Ministry to look into this matter carefully and try, to the best of their ability, to come to terms which are advantageous to you and to us alike.

With my regards and all good wishes to you,

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

FOREIGN POLICY

III. People's Republic of China

1. Resolution on China¹

Your telegram No. 451.² Proposed U.S. Resolution on China. We do not consider it desirable for us to sponsor resolution. There should be no objection, however, to supporting it, provided that in course of discussion:

- (i) no offensive references are made to U.S.S.R. (These will not help the Nationalist Government of China but will only add to the ill will and tension between the Soviet and the Western Powers) and
 - (ii) nothing is said that would embitter new regime in China, recognition of which, apart from question of timing on which there may be differences of opinion, is inevitable.
1. Cable to Indian Delegation to the U.N. in New York, New Delhi, 17 November 1949. J.N. Collection.
 2. B.N. Rau had telegraphed on 15 November 1949 that the U.S. had approached India for being one of the co-sponsors of a resolution to respect sovereignty of China and refrain from threatening its territorial integrity or political independence, to respect the right of the Chinese to choose freely their political institutions and to maintain a government independent of foreign control, to refrain from seeking spheres of influence or creating foreign-controlled regimes within China or using treaty rights to violate the first two principles. Rau had asked for instructions whether India might approve of the resolution with or without amendment.

2. Recognition of New Regime in China¹

The Government of India have given full consideration to the question of the recognition of the new regime in China. There is no doubt that this regime is well established, stable and likely to endure. It is exceedingly probable that in the course of the next few months the remaining parts of continental China will be under the control of the new regime. According to the latest reports, communist armies are within 90 miles of Chungking. There is no real opposition left, and there is no alternative in China to the new regime. It follows that the fact should be recognised so that normal dealings can take place with this new Government. Recognition, of course, does not involve approval of its policy; it is only a recognition of a political and historical fact, to ignore which is only to court embarrassment both in the present and the future.

1. Note sent to the Governments of Britain, Australia, Canada, Sri Lanka, U.S., and Burma, 20 November 1949. J.N. Collection.

2. The only question that arises is that of timing our recognition. We are strongly advised that delay in recognition may well be injurious both politically and economically and may encourage wrong tendencies in China. Delay in recognition must embitter those who control the new Government and enable them to rouse popular sentiment against foreigners among the Chinese people who are traditionally prone to xenophobia. It may also enable them to represent the delayed recognition, when it takes place, as humiliation for the recognising powers. Economically, it must hamper normal trade and commerce and cause loss to those foreigners who are engaged in it.

3. The internal situation in many countries in South East Asia, where there are large Chinese populations, also points to the need for early recognition. Strong elements of these populations are in sympathy with the new regime whose success has emboldened them and raised their morale. Delay in recognition can well lead these elements to foment trouble in these countries. We note that this was realized at the recent Regional Conference at Singapore and also by Burma which is anxious to give almost immediate recognition.² It may be inadvisable for any recognition to take place before the resolution on China is dealt with by the United Nations General Assembly but we think that recognition should not be delayed much beyond the end of the U.N. session. We feel that the proper time for recognition should be soon after the conclusion of the General Assembly, that is somewhere between the 15th and the 25th December.

2. The first country to recognize the new regime in China was the Soviet Union, followed by various other communist countries. Burma led the non-communist countries in according recognition to the new regime. India announced its recognition on 31 December 1949 and within months ambassadors were exchanged between the two countries. By the end of 1950 twenty-five countries had recognized People's China, but the U.S.A. refused to extend recognition to the new order and blocked People's China's attempts to replace the Kuomintang delegates in the United Nations by its own representatives.

3. To Tan Yun-shan¹

New Delhi

December 3, 1949

My dear Professor Tan Yun-shan,²

Thank you for your letter of the 29th November, which I have read with care.

I have been deeply exercised about affairs and developments in China. If my intervention in any way could do any good, I would most certainly intervene. But I do not see how I can make a difference by such an intervention at this stage.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Director, Sino-Indian Cultural Society, Santiniketan.

It is quite possible that any step that I might take might actually injure the cause that you and I may have at heart. Things have gone much too far. In the past many personal and fervent appeals were made to the parties concerned and especially to the Generalissimo. Unfortunately they produced no result. Now we have arrived at a stage, when the Nationalist Government has completely collapsed, while the communist Government will no doubt control the whole of continental China except Hong Kong very soon. I rather doubt if Formosa can make much difference for long. I do not agree with the ideology or the methods of the communists, though I do think that they have shown great ability and powers of organisation, and that some of their objectives are good. But whether I agree or not does not help much. The communists have said some very hard things about me.³ I do not mind this personally, though I regret it because this kind of thing produces wrong results anywhere. My appealing to the communists will not produce the slightest impression upon them. My appealing to the Generalissimo at this stage would have little meaning and would almost be discourteous.

As for recognition, there is no doubt that recognition has to be given to a fact. We have not been in a hurry to recognise. But you will have noticed the statements made by the British Foreign Office. If a step has to be taken, it should be taken at the right time, neither too early nor too late. To do it too late means that it has been taken under compulsion.

I have little doubt that the Chinese people will ultimately function in accordance with their genius. The whole of their history shows that. Meanwhile, however, they are going through, as they have gone through for many years, terrible misery and sorrow. I wish we could do something to lessen this.

If it was possible for you to bring peace to China, nothing could be better. But events move fast and I doubt if you will even reach the Generalissimo and Mao Tse-tung in time to make any difference. However, if you think it worthwhile, you can undertake this task. Even so, I rather think that you should do it without any special message from me, because my message would be misunderstood by both parties.

I am sorry I am not going to Santiniketan either for the Pacifists Conference or for the convocation. If you care to come to Delhi, I shall gladly meet you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. The communists in India and outside maintained that the Government of India was not sincere in its profession of an independent foreign policy. In the Moscow press there was a series of attacks on the Indian Government towards the end of 1948 and in 1949. The *New Times* dated 4 August 1949 carried an article entitled 'India's Plutocratic Dynasties', in which it was stated that Nehru was directing his country's affairs with the support of the war-mongers and trying to cut off the Indian people from their natural allies and liberty-loving peoples.

4. To Vallabhbhai Patel¹

New Delhi
6 December 1949

My dear Vallabhbhai,

Your letter of the 6th about China.² The U.N. session ends within a week. There was no intention of recognising the new regime in China immediately after the session. But roughly the date given by us to the Commonwealth Governments has been by Christmas time. You might have noticed that the answers in the House of Commons³ went a little beyond what I have said. In this matter the U.K. Government is anxious to recognise China early and even before some of the Commonwealth countries. During all our discussions in London and elsewhere, it was recognised by others that it might be desirable for India to accord recognition earlier than some of the others, but in consultation with them. Our advisers are of opinion that it would be definitely harmful to recognise them after the Commonwealth countries have done so. It would mean that we have no policy of our own, but follow the dictates of other countries. Burma is anxious to recognise and is being held back by us.

Canada entirely agreed with our viewpoint when we discussed it and indeed supported it before the U.S.A. But because of the U.S.A. they felt that they might wait a little, even though the U.K. might not.

The exact date does not matter. But it is rather important that this should be done before the Colombo Conference. We are as a matter of fact in continuous consultation with the ambassadors here as well as their respective countries and are acting in concert with most of them and there is no feeling on their part that we are acting independently.

If you like, I shall put it up before the Cabinet. But the date depends on so many factors that it will have to be left open. Most members of the Cabinet have hardly followed these intricate conversations and consultations. But as you are interested, I shall of course consult you before taking any action.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

1. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-50*, Vol. 8, pp. 87-88.
2. Vallabhbhai felt that, "we do not stand to gain anything substantial by giving a lead in the matter and that while recognition must come sooner or later, if we are somewhat late in the company of others, it would be worthwhile delaying a bit."
3. Hector MacNeil, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, announced in the House of Commons as early as October that His Majesty's Government, in recognising Communist China, would withdraw recognition from the Nationalist Government.

5. Cable to C.R. Attlee¹

We are grateful to you for your message of 18th December.² We are glad to note that your Government propose to accord *de jure* recognition to the Chinese Government in the near future, probably on 2nd January. We appreciate specially your taking into account views of Asian countries in regard to this problem which is primarily Asian. As you are aware, Burma has already recognised the new Chinese Government and there is a strong public demand in India for recognition. From the communications which we have received we are grateful to note that almost all the Governments whom we have consulted and, in particular Commonwealth Governments, understand our attitude in this matter, though each Government has of course to decide in accordance with its own circumstances. We note that United States may not, for special reasons, accord recognition at this stage.³ But we are sure that they will understand India's position in this matter. As we understand it, there is general agreement among Commonwealth countries about *de jure* recognition, and that this is likely to take place on or about 2nd January. In view of this decision slight variation of date of recognition as between Commonwealth countries will not affect concerted action in this respect. Having taken into account all relevant considerations, we propose to accord recognition before the end of the year. The date which we have in mind on which we should notify the new Chinese Government is 30th December.

1. New Delhi, 19 December 1949. J.N. Collection.
2. Attlee had written that 2 January had been fixed as the date but as a new Government in New Zealand had only just taken office and a new Australian Government would not be formed till the subsequent week and "it is asking rather a lot of them to make up their minds at such short notice." He also wrote that he did not expect to carry the U.S. with them on this question, but the Foreign Secretary had sent a message to Acheson.
3. The U.S. was distrustful of the intentions of the Chinese communists and regarded them as subordinates of the Russian communists. In terms of the cold war the victory of the Chinese communists increased the strength of the communist bloc. The statements of Chinese communists attacking the 'American imperialists' and eulogizing the Soviet Union served to confirm U.S. fears and misgivings. The Chinese communists, for their part, were equally suspicious of the United States, which, they thought, was hostile to the revolution and was working for the overthrow of their regime. American public opinion was rent by a debate over the 'loss' of China. Some powerful sections in the country, particularly the Republicans, charged the Government with 'betraying' Chiang Kai-shek and 'selling him out'. They advocated support to Chiang and the retention of Formosa by the U.S.A. even by force, if necessary.

6. Issues of Foreign Policy¹

The Prime Minister explained that the recognition of the new Government in China by India was inevitable. The question was only one of timing. The question had been discussed with the U.K., U.S.A., Burma, Siam, Commonwealth countries and others and the only difference of opinion was regarding the time at which recognition should be accorded.² Recognition does not necessarily involve approval or disapproval of the form of Government but is necessary because China is a big country and our neighbour. Also admittedly, for the first time, a strong and stable Government exists in China. Although we have hardly any common trade interests, we must recognise it and normal relations must be established. The United Kingdom have been anxious to recognise it for the last two or three months partly because of business interests.³ They also want to hold on to Hong Kong but that question is to be settled later and there is no danger of immediate war over Hong Kong.

2. The Prime Minister said that none knows what will happen in Tibet.⁴ If the Chinese wish to enter Tibet, there is none to hold them back except, perhaps, the climate. There is, however, no danger to India of anyone sweeping down over the

1. Proceedings of the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Legislature for the Ministry of External Affairs, 17 December 1949. Jawaharlal Nehru was in the chair. The members present were S.V. Krishnamurthy Rao, Begum Aizaz Rasul, Thirumala Rao, Girija Shankar Guha, Renuka Ray, N.G. Ranga and Srinivasa Mallayya. File No. 46-70/49-BC I (B), M.E.A., N.A.I.
2. Burma recognised People's China on 9 December 1949, followed by India on 30 December and Pakistan on 4 January 1950 and Britain, Sri Lanka and Norway on 6 January. They were followed by Denmark and Israel on 9 January, Finland and Afghanistan on 13 January and Sweden by 14 January 1950.
3. The United Kingdom was anxious to recognise the Government of Communist China without delay. Her interests in the Chinese mainland were different from those of other countries. Hong Kong, her colony, was surrounded by communist territory. The interests of British industrialists and merchants in China were very important. She had, therefore, to recognise whatever Government ruled over the Chinese mainland.
4. The Chinese had for centuries been claiming, and at times exercising, suzerainty over Tibet, the extent of Chinese control being dependent on the strength of the Central Government in China. The Kuomintang had also maintained a mission in Lhasa. When the Chinese communists assumed power they proclaimed Tibet to be an integral part of China. They were suspicious about alleged alien activity in Tibet which aimed at repudiating Chinese authority over Tibet. The Chinese appeared to suspect that India was abetting these activities. India inherited from Britain the rights to station an Indian Political Agent at Lhasa, to maintain trade agencies at Gyantse, Gartok, and Yatung, and posts and telegraph offices along the trade route up to Gyantse, and the right to station a small military escort at Gyantse to protect this commercial highway. India wanted to preserve her trade and cultural interests in Tibet but not these territorial rights.

Himalayas. There is, also, no danger of invasion of Assam or Nepal. The Government of China will not evoke a conflict with India or anyone else but it is possible that guerilla bands, irregulars or fifth columnists will start working. It is, therefore, necessary for the regime to be recognised so that such questions can be effectively taken up and dealt with through normal channels.

3. The Prime Minister explained that we should not delay the question of recognition of China too much, while at the same time, we should not show that we are eager to do so. While America, because of frustration and anger at the failure of their policy in China and the treatment of their Consul at Mukden,⁵ are not likely to recognise hurriedly, delay in the recognition by India would not be good. We should rather not wait till the Colombo Conference but should accord recognition before then.

4. The Prime Minister stated that the Burmese Foreign Minister⁶ had arrived in Delhi and had seen him. He had explained the situation and apprehension of the Government of Burma regarding the position on the Burma-China frontier. In Burma itself, a considerable part of the country is now fairly normal. Some parts in the east are still held by the Karens and in the centre conflict is still going on.⁷ In the frontier areas, there is trouble and apprehension of trouble. On the whole, the situation in Burma is pretty fluid at present. The Chinese situation is a disturbing element. The Prime Minister stated that Burma would recognise China that day. The Burmese realise now that they must come to terms with the Karens.

5. The Prime Minister explained that the position in the French Settlements in India was unsatisfactory.⁸ This was due partly to the influence of the official element and partly to the Socialist Party which was now anti-merger, though at one stage they had promised to vote for a merger with India. At the Paris end,

5. In October 1949 the Chinese Government arrested the American Consul in Mukden on the charge of beating a Chinese employee, and deported him, after trying and convicting him. The incident produced strong emotional repercussions in the United States. Later, when Peking confiscated some American consular property, the United States withdrew all its consular personnel from the mainland.
6. U.E. Maung Gye.
7. Government forces captured the coastal town of Thauton from the Karens and Kauksea from the communists on 27 June 1949. They expelled "White Band" forces from the Madaya (north of Mandalay) in September and recaptured Danubyu and Htonegyi (35 miles north of Rangoon) from the Karens on 29 November. Off the Arakan coast, the Government forces recaptured Ramre town on 13 September 1949.
8. The French India Municipal Congress, meeting at Pondicherry on 18 October recommended the acceptance and immediate implementation of French proposals according to which Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam would be granted autonomous status within the framework of the French Union. The Congress also recommended a referendum to decide the future status of the settlements.

Mr Schuman⁹ takes a fairly reasonable view but the difficulty is to deal with the French Foreign Office and the French Civil Servants. The referendum which is now fixed for February 1950, may go against us if held, but we are doing all we can to obtain a favourable result.

6. Regarding Goa, the Prime Minister explained that we have made extremely little progress. The only development has been that the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Church over territories in India is now being ended with the concurrence of the Government of Portugal. The Holy See agreed with this.

7. The Prime Minister stated that the Round Table Conference at The Hague had been successful.¹⁰ As a result, the relations of Indonesia with Holland were hereafter to be roughly similar to those of India with the Commonwealth. The Round Table Conference decisions have been accepted in Indonesia except by the communists and an orthodox Muslim group, the Dar-ul-Islam. There has been some trouble over the withdrawal of Dutch troops. The formal handing over is to take place on the 27th December. Some complication has arisen from the insistence of the Queen of Holland on the Indonesian leader, Dr Hatta, going to The Hague for the handing over. Dr Hatta cannot be at The Hague and in Indonesia at the same time and it is not known how this difficulty will be ultimately overcome.

8. The Prime Minister stated that President Soekarno had invited him for the Independence celebrations. He could not, however, go and it had been decided that Rajkumari Amrit Kaur would represent India.

9. The new name of Indonesia would be 'the Republic of the United States of Indonesia.' We have decided to recognise it and to establish diplomatic relations from the date it comes into being. It had been decided to send Dr Subbarayan as India's first Ambassador to Indonesia.

10. The Prime Minister explained that he would go to Colombo for the Commonwealth Conference on the 8th January 1950, will stay there for 5 days and return to New Delhi on the 15th January. Although the Conference is scheduled to last for 10 days, he could not remain away from India for a longer period. No formal agenda for the Conference had been circulated and it was usual for these Conferences not to have any formal agenda. Usually no resolutions are passed or formal decisions recorded. The statements of the various representatives are merely noted.

11. The Prime Minister mentioned that he had been assured that there was no question of the scaling down of India's sterling balances. On the way back from his visit to America, he had met Mr Anthony Eden as well as Mr Winston Churchill and he felt sure that whatever their views in the past, they were now committed to the action taken by the Labour Government in respect of India.

9. Robert Schuman.

10. On 2 November 1949, the Round Table Conference ended with the signing, by the Netherlands Republic and the Federalists of Indonesia, of the Charter on the transfer of sovereignty and the statute of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union.

12. Talking about devaluation, the Prime Minister mentioned that no one knew that it was coming and Sir Stafford Cripps had not mentioned the matter even to some British Cabinet Ministers. As a matter of fact, two of our people knew of the forthcoming devaluation before some British Cabinet Ministers. There would have been no devaluation in India without the pound being devalued. The surprise was not devaluation but the extent of devaluation.

13. The Prime Minister referred to the graceful manner in which the British Parliament had passed the India Bill¹¹ continuing the existing rights of Indians in U.K. and Colonies after the 26th January 1950 when India becomes a Republic.

14. Regarding the Kashmir issue, the Prime Minister explained that the report of the U.N.C.I.P. was to be presented to the Security Council and was expected to be accepted without discussion. Thereafter, the Chairman, General McNaughton would hold private talks with the parties. These talks would not take more than a few days and there would be no long arguments. It is hoped to finish the discussions within a fortnight because the present Chairman will demit office at the end of the month and the next Chairman is to be the Chinese representative. The Soviet Government are likely to object to the present Chinese representative and there is likely to be some difficulty and delay over the matter.

15. The Prime Minister also explained that on the first January India will take its seat on the Security Council. As Shri B.N. Rau may still be dealing with Kashmir, he can sit on the Council as India's representative and Shri G.S. Bajpai will take the seat on behalf of India. After the Kashmir business is over, Shri Bajpai will return and Shri B.N. Rau will take his place on the Council.

16. The Prime Minister explained that sometime ago, he had suggested a declaration by India and Pakistan that all disputes between them will be settled peaceably and there will be no resort to armed conflict on any question. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, when questioned on the subject, is reported to have said that he had received no communication from the Government of India. On seeing this, the Prime Minister had decided to make a reference and an informal approach had been made through the Pakistan High Commissioner in India. As a further development, it is now proposed to send a draft agreement to the Government of Pakistan with a view to signature by both countries. This is expected to improve relations between the two countries by ruling out all question of decision of disputes by armed conflict.

17. The Prime Minister stated that in spite of difficulties, we have done well in our missions abroad. He could point out failures and successes. There have been petty troubles. There have also been some bad cases but on the whole we have done well.

11. The India (Consequential Provisions) Bill presented on 5 December 1949 in the British Parliament was designed to safeguard Indian citizens' rights and privileges already enjoyed under the British law. The Bill received an unopposed passage through both Houses and was enacted on 16 December.

18. Regarding the case of our Embassy in Brazil, the Prime Minister mentioned that all that happened was on a personal level between the Head of Mission and two officers. In one instance Mr Atal had been found, after examination of papers, not to blame and had been exonerated fully.

7. Cable to B.N. Rau¹

Your telegram No. 38 dated 30th January. We agree that side-tracking of Chinese issue is not only unrealistic but also injurious to U.N.O. But responsibility for this rests primarily on U.S.A. and some other Governments who have not yet recognised new Chinese regime in China. Even U.K. which has recognised their regime has been hesitant in following this up logically in Security Council. Unless some of the countries are prepared to revise their previous opinions, there is little chance of necessary votes being obtained. We see no reason why India should take lead in this matter, though we would support admission of representative of new Chinese Government if matter came before Security Council. If Trygve Lie anxious to solve present deadlock, he should move U.S.A. and other countries.

1. New Delhi, 31 January 1950. J.N. Collection.

FOREIGN POLICY

IV. The Commonwealth Conference at Colombo

1. Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Colombo Conference¹

Pandit Nehru said that, although India had no commercial interests in China, events in that country were perhaps of closer concern to her than to any other Commonwealth Government. The Government of India had kept the position under review since August, and they had been in close consultation about it with the other Commonwealth Governments and with the Government of the United States. He had himself taken the opportunity of his visit to Canada and the United States to discuss the matter with those two Governments. It was generally appreciated, both in Canada and in the United States, that India's special interests in China made it necessary for her to accord early recognition to the new Chinese Government. Moreover, public opinion in India had been strongly in favour of early recognition, and this was also recommended by all who were familiar with conditions in China. The Indian Government had therefore decided to recognise the communist Government in China some time in the second half of December, 1949. They had suggested a date after 15th December, 1949, as the meeting of the General Assembly would then be over, and the new Governments in Australia and New Zealand would have taken office. Once the principle of recognition had been accepted, the difference of a few days in the actual dates on which different Commonwealth countries accorded recognition was not a matter of much concern. When the Indian Government had learned that the United Kingdom Government were proposing to accord recognition in the first week of January, they had decided to accord recognition themselves on 30th December, 1949 and had informed the other Commonwealth Governments and the United States Government accordingly.

Pandit Nehru said that the emergence of the new Chinese Government was a highly significant event for the whole of South East Asia and, less directly for the whole world. The important fact was, not that this was a communist Government, but that a strong and powerful Central Government had arisen in China for the first time for many generations. It seemed unlikely that any internal or external force could upset this Government. The United States had tried to help the Nationalist Government of China with money and arms, but their policy had failed. It was probable that their intervention had even served to help the communists.

1. 10 January 1950. J.N. Collection. The six-day Commonwealth Conference of Foreign Ministers began in Colombo on 9 January 1950 under the chairmanship of D.S. Senanayake, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and leader of the Sri Lanka delegation. In all there were eleven *in camera* meetings. The final session which took place in public was confined to expressions of thanks by the leaders of different delegations to the Government and people of Sri Lanka and the reply by Senanayake. Extracts from the official record of the meetings are given in this section.

For the Chinese strongly resented all form of foreign intervention. This failure of United States policy was to be remembered by Commonwealth Governments when considering their future policy towards the new regime in China. His view was that it was neither possible nor desirable to use any military weapon against the new China. If China could secure some years of peace, she could become very strong economically. She had a powerful industrial base in Manchuria on which to build. Her economic power was already great and potentially much greater. The emergence of this new regime had altered the whole balance of power in South East Asia and to some extent in the world.

The communists' success was largely due to the fact that they were regarded as a liberating force which would free the people from foreign dominations and could offer a new hope of economic advancement. The Chinese people welcomed the new regime, not because it was communist, but because anything was better than the old. Similar forces were at work throughout South East Asia. Any Government which wished to stem the tide of communism in South East Asia must be able to offer the people something more than counter propaganda, money and arms. It must be able to show the people that it also is a liberating force. The masses in Asia were dissatisfied with things as they were. The Kuomintang Government had failed because it was completely authoritarian and tolerated no criticism from any quarter. People of all classes thus became anti-Government, though they had no sympathy with communism, there was no place for them in the existing regime. The political stability of India was due, first, to the fact that there was a democratic government which could be changed by the will of the people and, secondly, to the fact that the Government had gone some way to meet the demands of the Indian peasantry, who were a good deal better off than they had been. Neither of these conditions had been present in China under the Kuomintang Government.

For two thousand years the countries of South East Asia had been influenced by Chinese and Indian culture. These influences were still at work there—the more so since the colonial domination of the Western powers had been withdrawn. The Commonwealth were playing for very high stakes in South East Asia and one false move would create great difficulties in the future. The delay in securing a political settlement in Indonesia had increased the communist threat in South East Asia. In Indo-China a solution was not yet in sight. Any vestige of colonialism in South East Asia would be a continuing source of friction and would be exploited by the communists. The French were showing similar reluctance to reach agreement over the future of their territories in India; and India's goodwill towards France was rapidly disappearing in consequence.

The new Chinese Government would be fully occupied with its internal problems for some years to come. But Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai were hard, able and experienced men who knew China well. They were no doubt orthodox communists but they had proceeded cautiously and had established a coalition

Government with Madame Sun Yat-sen, by no means a communist, as their senior Vice President. He did not know which way China would go—whether they would become more communist or more Chinese. He could not conceive of China as being a camp follower of Russia. He thought they would more likely to go their own way, although for a time it would probably pay them to cooperate with Russia in international affairs. In his view the main purpose of according recognition to the new regime was to gain an opportunity of influencing its development. It did not imply approval of the regime. It did not mean that one could not be quite firm in resisting any threat of aggression or any intervention in one's domestic affairs. Firmness on such points was, in his view, essential. But it was quite consistent with that attitude to adopt a policy of cautious friendliness in one's other relations with the new regime, and that was the policy which he recommended.

2. Minutes of the Fifth Meeting¹

Pandit Nehru said that India was greatly interested in the terms of the future peace treaty with Japan.² Not only had she taken a prominent part in the Japanese war but she had suffered considerable physical damage as a result. Moreover, the whole of East Asia would be vitally affected by the decisions taken regarding the Treaty. While he sympathised with the fears of Australia and New Zealand, he felt that it was easy to exaggerate the danger of a resurgence of Japan's military power in the near future.³ In the present context of international affairs it was not possible to look too far ahead and he doubted whether Japan could re-emerge as a great military power in the next generation or two. In considering the general principles to be followed in drafting a peace treaty with Japan, a basic factor to be taken into account was the probable reaction of the Japanese people themselves. It was true that, while restrictions and controls were in force, there was not much that the Japanese people could do; but those controls could not last for ever and, if

1. Colombo, 11 January 1950. J.N. Collection, Extracts.
2. Over the terms of the Japanese Peace Treaty, the Indian Government emphasised that the treaty should concede to Japan a position of honour, equality and contentment among the community of free nations and the terms should be so framed as to enable all countries, interested in the maintenance of peace in the East Asia, to subscribe to the treaty. India desired to associate Soviet Russia and China in any scheme of pacific settlement in the East Asia.
3. Australia and New Zealand were not convinced that the Japanese nation had experienced any change of heart. They insisted upon guarantees against possible renewed Japanese aggression through the creation of a security pact of which the U.S. was a member.

the restrictions were too severe, they might create in the minds of the Japanese people a smouldering resentment which, when they had to be relaxed, would burst out in a most dangerous form. He did not know precisely what the present political situation in Japan was, but he felt that the mass of the Japanese people were irritated by the United States occupation.⁴ The American approach tended to stress financial considerations too strongly and did not take sufficiently into account the psychological effects of policy.

There seemed to be a fundamental difference between the points of view of Australia and New Zealand on the one hand and of the United States on the other with regard to Japan. Australia and New Zealand were primarily concerned with safeguards against the military resurgence of Japan, but the United States were now more concerned to build up Japan as a bulwark against Soviet aggression. If the United States persevered in their attempt to build up Japan as a base against the Soviet Union and China, this would probably result in an internal conflict within Japan itself and the Soviet Union and China would take full advantage of such a situation. The Soviet Government would be enabled to present themselves to the Japanese people as the future liberators of Japan from American domination.

The other aspect of the matter to be considered was the economic one. China must inevitably play an important part in all Japan's trade relations. No long-term solution of Japan's economic problem was possible unless there were an outlet for her trade in China for the economies of Japan and China were complementary. Japan needed China's markets and raw materials, while China was equally in need of Japan's manufactured goods and industrial and technical assistance. Any attempt to prevent artificially the normal commercial intercourse between China and Japan was bound to end in failure and might have disastrous effects on Japan.

Pandit Nehru doubted whether it would be possible at the present Conference to reach agreement on the terms of a Japanese Treaty. He agreed, however, that every attempt should be made to induce China and, if possible, the Soviet Union to take part in the discussion of the Treaty. Because of the close natural affinities between India and Japan it was impossible to ignore China completely in any enduring settlement with Japan. He did not think it would be appropriate at this stage to discuss the United Kingdom memorandum in detail. With some of the suggestions in that memorandum he found himself in agreement; others, he thought, might have adverse effects on the Japanese people.

He agreed with the view expressed by Mr Sauer⁵ that it was not possible to hold down indefinitely by force a nation of 80 million disciplined and industrious people. Every attempt should be made to persuade them to follow a democratic path, but it was impossible to compel them by force to do so.

4. India objected to the U.S. insistence on the continued stationing of the U.S. army in Japan through a bilateral treaty of military alliance and to the U.S. taking over of the Kyukyu and Bonin Islands to be placed later under its trusteeship.

5. Paul Oliver Sauer (b. 1898); South African politician; Minister of Transport, 1948-54.

Japan was now recovering from the shock of her defeat and the Japanese people were in a particularly receptive frame of mind. It was, therefore, very necessary that policies should be adopted which would ensure that Japan would move in the direction which all desired. . . .

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the considerations put forward in this discussion afforded a further argument for according recognition to the new Government of China. Countries which had not recognised that Government would not be able to make any diplomatic approach to China in matters affecting the Japanese Peace Treaty. . . .

3. Minutes of the Sixth Meeting¹

Pandit Nehru said that the political and economic aspects were closely connected. As far as the political aspect was concerned, the principal objective was the complete removal of foreign domination over all the countries of this region. The more important and pressing problem was the economic one. South East Asia was in urgent need of economic development, which would help in solving not only the economic problems of the region itself but also those of certain other parts of the world. The question had been considered by various bodies, particularly by certain subsidiary organs of the United Nations Organisation but, although a number of careful investigations had been made, few practical results had followed.

South East Asia was urgently in need of economic, financial and technical assistance from abroad, but he was not altogether clear in his own mind how this could best be made available. One possible channel was the United Nations Organisation and its subsidiary bodies. It did not seem to be a matter for the Commonwealth as such; although a number of Commonwealth Governments had already considered economic assistance to one of the countries of the region, namely, Burma. After careful deliberation, those Governments had come to the conclusion that the present Burmese Government was the only one which offered a reasonable hope of stability; and they had decided that, in spite of the difficulties involved and the natural reluctance of the countries concerned to become embroiled in the internal civil strife in Burma, assistance should be given. A committee consisting of Ambassadors of the countries concerned had therefore been set up in Rangoon

1. Colombo, 11 January 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.

and this committee was still considering ways and means of making assistance available.² On the eve of Pandit Nehru's departure for the Colombo Conference, the Burmese Foreign Minister had called on him in Delhi to press for Commonwealth assistance to be accelerated. He thought it would be desirable to extend to Burma the assistance she needed, but careful consideration should be given to the form which it should take.

As regards Indonesia, Pandit Nehru said that he welcomed the happy settlement which had been arrived at between the Dutch and the Indonesians. The present Government of the United States of Indonesia should be given every possible assistance and encouragement to establish a strong and stable regime in the country. It was probable that the new State would receive financial and other assistance from the United States of America.

Siam, Pandit Nehru thought, did not require any direct assistance at the moment. She had enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity during and after the war and her peasantry were relatively contented. The regime in Siam could not, however, be described as a progressive one, and it was his opinion that it was not too stable.³ It was quite possible that a palace or army revolution might upset the present Government.

Pandit Nehru next referred to the position in Indo-China. There, as in other countries of Asia, there were two primary urges which found expression in the actions of the people, namely, the nationalist urge for freedom from foreign domination and the social urge for the betterment of the economic condition of the masses of the people. Any policy which was to have a reasonable chance of success would necessarily have to encourage and satisfy the nationalist urge. Any form of foreign intervention, particularly armed intervention, would be resented. He could not see how any solution of the Indo-Chinese problem was possible so long as French armies operated on Indo-Chinese soil. He did not believe that the French would succeed in Indo-China in a military sense unless they poured into

2. The question of giving aid to Burma was discussed in April 1949 at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference held in London. It was decided to give coordinated joint aid to Thakin Nu's Government in the form of arms and loans and to set up a Burma Aid Committee to implement the decision. The Ambassadors of Britain, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan in Burma were the members of the Committee. During their meetings at Rangoon they discussed at length the extent and manner of financial and military assistance to be given to the Burmese Government to tide over the difficult economic situation and to suppress the country-wide insurrections. In December, the Burmese Foreign Minister visited New Delhi to discuss with Nehru certain matters concerning the subject. It was, however, only in 1950 that the proposals took shape and a programme of £ 6,000,000 as aid to Burma was finally drawn up by the Commonwealth states.
3. The Government of Thailand did not have a representative character and found protection for itself against its internal and external enemies in military alliances with the Western powers. It followed an anti-communist policy and refused to recognize the People's Republic of China. Thailand was also given extensive economic aid by the United States.

the country much larger forces than were at present contemplated. Even if they did succeed, the victory would, in his opinion, be barren, as they would in the process have antagonised all the nationalist elements in the country. The rapid communist victories in China had introduced a new factor into the Indo-Chinese situation as they had brought the Chinese communist armies to the borders of the country. The Chinese communists would probably use every propaganda weapon against what they considered a foreign imperialist power at their borders, and this propaganda was likely to have a powerful effect on the Indo-Chinese people.

In conclusion, Pandit Nehru referred to the draft resolution proposing a ten-year plan for the economic development of South East Asia which had been submitted to the Conference by the Ceylon Minister of Finance. It was not clear to him how this plan was to be implemented. He felt that a committee of technical experts could only determine broad priorities, and that detailed plans would have to be worked out by each individual country for itself. The committee of experts could, however, make recommendations regarding extensive projects, e.g., river valley development schemes.⁴

4. The Commonwealth Foreign Ministers held separate meetings exchanging information on economic developments in the Commonwealth countries and the balance of payments position of the Commonwealth. They recognised, as the final communique issued on 14 January 1950 stated that "in the changing conditions brought about by recent developments in this area, progress depends mainly on the improvement of economic conditions." The Conference resulted in the agreement among the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers that communism could be checked throughout South East Asia by economic action.

4. Minutes of the Seventh Meeting¹

Pandit Nehru said that he had listened with great interest to Mr Malcolm MacDonald's² account of the impressions which he had formed in his recent visit to Indo-China. From the information available to them, however, the Indian Government had formed a somewhat different picture of the situation. According to that information Bao Dai had little influence over the bulk of the population, and little enthusiasm had been displayed at the recent transfer of power to his regime.

1. Colombo, 12 January 1950. J.N. Collection.
2. Commissioner-General for the U.K. in South East Asia at this time.

Pandit Nehru reviewed the events of the last few years in Indo-China. In the middle of 1946 an agreement had been initialled in Paris between the French Government and the nationalist leader Ho Chi Minh. This, however, was never ratified by the French, and for the last three-and-a-half years there had been almost continuous fighting in the country between the French and the supporters of Ho Chi Minh. Although the French had made very great efforts and were reported to be employing over 100,000 troops, their efforts to suppress the Ho Chi Minh Party had not been successful; and this use of French forces was bound to be repugnant to nationalist feeling in the country. Ho Chi Minh himself was admittedly a communist, but he had won the support of a fairly wide section of the nationalist non-communist elements in the country. The very fact that the Bao Dai regime functioned under French auspices weakened its position in the country vis-a-vis the nationalist element. Moreover, Bao Dai's own personal record hardly fitted him to be an effective or powerful national leader. He therefore doubted whether the Bao Dai experiment was likely to succeed. As regards the agreements reached between Bao Dai and the French Government, Pandit Nehru said that the power transferred to Bao Dai fell far short of complete independence.

On recognition, Pandit Nehru said that representatives of Ho Chi Minh's party had approached the Indian Government for informal recognition. In particular they had sought an invitation to the Asian Relations Conference recently held in Delhi. More recently Bao Dai's regime had also approached the Indian Government for recognition. The latter approach had been made through the French Ambassador in New Delhi and this confirmed the impression that the Bao Dai Government was merely a puppet Government acting under French control.² Mr Bevin had suggested that the Commonwealth Governments should accord *de facto*, but not *de jure*, recognition to Bao Dai. He found it difficult to believe that such recognition would lead to any happy result. The experience of the Indian Government with the remnants of the French colonial system in India were most discouraging and led them to distrust French intentions in Indo-China. Information had also reached him that the Chinese nationalist troops who had retreated into Indo-China had actually gone over to Ho Chi Minh and were fighting as mercenaries against the French.

His advice was that no definite action in relation to Indo-China should be taken at this stage, but that the situation should be watched carefully in order to determine what action should be taken in the future.

2. In October 1946, shortly before the first Asian Conference, Nehru sent his greetings and good wishes to Ho Chi Minh. In contrast, he declined the request of Bao Dai, the Emperor of Annam, to raise the issue of Vietnam in the United Nations Security Council. During the Franco-Vietnamese hostilities, which broke out in December 1946, Nehru warned France against the use of force in Indo-China, and declared that India's sympathies were with Vietnam. Mahatma Gandhi and the then Congress President also sent messages of sympathy to Ho.

Pandit Nehru said that there was no action which could be taken with the certainty of success and it was necessary to decide which was the lesser risk. Nothing should be done which would run counter to the nationalist aspirations of the people of Indo-China. But which of the two parties operating in Indo-China more truly represented nationalism? Bao Dai's career had not been such as to inspire confidence: he had supported the Japanese early in the recent war, had later resigned his position as Emperor and joined Ho Chi Minh's resistance movement against the French, and now had changed sides once again. It was unlikely that this record would make it easy for him to exercise authority. Moreover, the inept policy of the French authorities over the last three and a half years had made them extremely unpopular in Indo-China and it was not likely that any regime which they supported would be able quickly to overcome this handicap. Ho Chi Minh's party no less than Bao Dai's depended for its chief support on the nationalist elements within it, but if it became isolated from the democratic powers it might come wholly under communist influence. He had been asked in the discussion what advice he would give to the French. If he had to advise them now, he would be inclined to urge them to try to bring out a rapprochement between the two parties on the basis of arranging for free elections with a view to the appointment of a constituent assembly which might devise means of establishing a new single government.

Pandit Nehru said that he could not subscribe to any statement which implied approval of the past policy of the French and several alternative forms of draft were suggested to meet this objection.

Pandit Nehru explained that his Government were finding it necessary to cut down expenditure very drastically. They were therefore able to offer only £1 million, to be made available from their No. 2 Account in London, as their contribution to this loan. This would of course be subject to parliamentary sanction.

Pandit Nehru also referred to the proposed advances for the purchase of Burmese rice. India would agree to take her proportionate share, subject to satisfaction on quality and weight.

Pandit Nehru said that he would like to see the Karen dispute brought to an early end but the position was extremely delicate, as the Burmese Government naturally resented any attempt to interfere in their domestic affairs. He understood that a further effort was now being made by the Burmese Government to come to terms with the Karens, and that agreement on a settlement had, in fact, been reached some time ago but had not yet been put into effect owing to the bitter feelings on both sides. . . .

5. Minutes of the Eighth Meeting¹

Pandit Nehru said that, as he had indicated in the earlier discussion that morning, the Indian Government were prepared to make their proportionate contribution towards this loan subject to satisfaction on the quality and weight of the rice. He thought it right, however, to point out that there had been a great reduction in India's rice consumption and their imports of rice in the coming year were likely to be comparatively small.

Pandit Nehru said that there would be general agreement that urgent action should be taken to promote the economic development of South East Asia. The problem to be considered was what exactly was needed and how best it could be done. He welcomed the suggestions contained in F.M.M. (50) 4 and 6, but he thought that many complex issues were involved and that before the proposed consultative committee could make any substantial progress, each country would have to draw up a detailed plan of its own needs and proposals. He therefore suggested that Commonwealth Governments should be given time to examine the proposals in detail, and that a meeting should then be held at which more specific recommendations could be made.

Pandit Nehru said that it was important that each country should plan its own development and assess its own requirements. There were many factors to be considered; above all greater productivity from labour was required. Each country must mobilise its resources of skilled manpower and make plans for training more people in scientific techniques. He would have no objection to a Consultative Committee of Commonwealth countries whose function it would be to consider how to coordinate each Government's requirements after those Governments had drawn up their plans. But the first need was for each country to have its own plans for development.

The conference agreed in principle to make recommendation to Governments about means of promoting economic development in South East Asia on the lines indicated in F.M.M. (50)6; but instructed the economic advisers attached to the Delegations to consider in detail the phrasing of those recommendations and report their conclusions on the following day.²

1. Colombo, 12 January 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. On 13 January 1950, the Conference endorsed a Commonwealth mutual aid programme aimed at the development of South and South East Asia. It was reported that P.C. Spender, Australia's Minister for External Affairs, who originally sponsored the programme, urged the conference to 'keep in mind' the idea of a Pacific Pact modelled on the North Atlantic Pact and the eventual American participation in the Commonwealth aid programme, which was a positive step towards stemming the spread of communism in South East Asia. A Consultative Committee was established at the Colombo Conference and fresh developments were expected at the next Commonwealth Conference which was to be held at Sydney in May 1950.

6. Scope of Commonwealth Talks¹

... Question: Can you brief us on the industrial and economic outlook in India?

Jawaharlal Nehru: In the Government's plans for development of agriculture and industry in India, the first priority has been accorded to food production. India needs capital goods and trained personnel to bolster agricultural and industrial production. Increased steel production is priority number two in the economic aid required by India. India has made substantial advance in regard to scientific research to facilitate her programme of economic development. There are various short-term measures as well as long-term ones like huge river valley projects. Owing to lack of finance, we have the painful duty of selecting schemes with which to go ahead while leaving others for later implementation.

Q: How is India going to solve the population problem?

JN: Though India is heavily populated, there remains a large part of the country neither populous nor cultivated. There is little the Government can do to keep down population at this stage. A realistic approach is required for present-day problems. There is far too much of what I call the academic and debating society approach. I believe in socialism but it must be realised that no question can be isolated in life and must be viewed in its historical and social context.

Q: What is the progress of discussion in the Commonwealth Conference?

JN: These conferences are intended primarily for exchange of opinion. We discuss common problems, but there are no formal resolutions. We try to avoid majority or any other binding decisions. Each country values cooperation, but also sets great store by independence of action. The Conference is not any kind of tribunal to decide on disputes between various members.

Q: What is India's position with regard to Burma?

JN: India has helped and will continue to help the Burmese Government without interfering in Burma's internal affairs.

1. Remarks at a press conference, Colombo, 13 January 1950. From *The Hindu*, 14 January 1950. Extracts.

Q: Is it worthwhile to have come all the way to the Commonwealth Conference?

JN: Most certainly, yes. No formal agreements or resolutions will emerge from the Conference ending here tomorrow. The Conference has been satisfactory. By its very nature, it has avoided discussion of inter-Dominion issues such as the Kashmir dispute, the South African Indian problem and relations between Ceylon and India. The Commonwealth nations freely exchange views and discuss problems of mutual interest and come as near as possible to each other. It is not a tribunal for deciding inter-Dominion disputes. Each Commonwealth nation values cooperation with the rest, but each of them values independence of action more. I shall formally sum up my views of the Conference at tomorrow's open session. It has resulted in progressive cooperation among the Commonwealth nations. I attribute some of the adverse press comments in London on the Commonwealth Conference to internal politics of the United Kingdom. I do not think the trend of events in the Far East will have any direct effects on India. This certainly is a difficult period for India but it is mainly because of our internal problems.

Q: Can India mediate between world power blocs?

JN: How can India propose anything of the kind? It is nonsense for anybody to talk of India being a mediator.

Q: Would you discuss with the Indian High Commissioner, Mr V.V. Giri, and leaders of the Indian community here regarding problems confronting the Indians in the country?

JN: I would not be able to discuss Indo-Ceylon relations during my present visit to Colombo. It is neither practical nor suitable for the occasion.

Q: What is the future of the English language in India?

JN: English will no doubt be the best known and most widespread foreign language in India, but the general quality of English in the country will go down.

Q: Have you any message to Ceylonese women?

JN: Take a more active part in the country's political life.

The Ceylon Indian problem is concerned with two distinct categories—Indian nationals resident in Ceylon and Ceylonese nationals of Indian origin. India is vitally concerned over the welfare of the first category whose interests are under the care of the Indian High Commissioner. Regarding problems facing the second category, I caution the questioners. We have got to remember that we are two independent

nations. India is also interested in them and wants to help them in the solution of their problems because of certain historical connections. The Indian Government was originally responsible for sending Indian labour to Ceylon...

7. A Worthwhile Conference¹

I express my appreciation and gratitude to Mr Senanayake for the manner in which he has conducted the proceedings of the Conference, and to the Government and people of Ceylon for their hospitality.

We are evolving something that is important, something that is new, a kind of invisible link that is more endurable than a visible binding link. Under a visible link one always feels its pressure, but not so with the invisible link. This Conference, I would say, has been worthwhile.

To say that this Conference was going to solve world problems is just not to understand either the world problems or this Conference. If world problems could be solved that way, they should have been solved long ago. We may not solve world problems, but such a Conference helps us to prevent things from going completely astray.

We have all approached the various problems discussed, with as much objectivity as we could command and with the desire to understand the other man's point of view. This is an achievement for the representatives of peoples with differing geographical, historical and cultural backgrounds.

I hope the Conference has set an example for such discussions with goodwill and cooperation between men, who do not and need not think alike. There is, therefore, some reason for satisfaction at the work that has been done.

I regard the Conference itself as remarkable and significant. People from distant parts of the world responsible in each case to their own people and legislatures, met together and discussed world problems and their own problems with friendliness and a desire to reach an understanding.

It is not the function of this Conference to give any executive direction or lay down any official directions to the Governments represented here.

At a time when certain disintegrating forces are abroad, it is a matter of significance that members of Commonwealth nations met together and tried to cooperate with each other.

We go back not having solved any major problem but with good heart to face the future. While it is wrong to expect too much from the Conference, it is equally wrong to belittle it.

1. Nehru's remarks at the public session at the end of the six-day Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference, Colombo, 14 January 1950. From *The Hindu*, 16 January 1950.

9

FOREIGN POLICY
V. U.S.S.R.

1. To S.Radhakrishnan¹

New Delhi
November 25, 1949

My dear Radhakrishnan,

I must apologise to you for the delay in acknowledging your letter and reports² sent to me, while I was travelling in the United States. I received two letters from you dated October 27th and November 1st.³ They were interesting. I am glad you spoke to Mikhailov⁴ about the various matters which you mention.⁵ There is only one thing I would like to suggest. From your report it almost appears that we were somewhat apologetic about what we had done or that it required some explanation. Explanations should of course always be given. But there is nothing that we have done for which an apologetic explanation is needed. The comments in the Soviet

1. File No.1(97)-Eur-II/49, M.E.A., N.A.I.
2. The reports contained Radhakrishnan's note along with the press cuttings of articles which appeared in the *New Times*, *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* about Nehru's visit to the U.S.A., Indo-American economic relations, the Kashmir problem, the situation in South East Asia and the Pacific Pact, and the Soviet conception of communist activities in India.
3. Radhakrishnan congratulated Nehru on the 'triumphal' tour of the U.S. and hoped "the visit will result in substantial good to our country both materially and spiritually." As the Soviet press was very critical about the visit he had met the Head of the Indian Division in the Soviet Foreign Office and explained the matters to him.
4. K.A. Mikhailov, Head of the South East Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U.S.S.R.
5. Radhakrishnan met Mikhailov on 29 October in U.S.S.R. regarding Nehru's visit to U.S.A. "to remove any misapprehensions which might exist". Referring to the Soviet press reports on Kashmir he said that India had rejected the personal appeal issued by Truman and Attlee and stood by her own offer. In regard to South East Asia India was not interested in any kind of pact. On the question of foreign and economic aid, he said India was keen on large-scale trade relations with friendly countries. On matters of foreign relations India adopted a non-aligned, independent approach to all problems. He emphasized his eagerness to promote closer Indo-Soviet relations. Mikhailov, however, felt disturbed with Nehru's statement that India would not remain neutral when aggression took place, and refused to comment on the visit which was not yet over.

press about my visit to the U.S. or generally about our policy⁶ are often enough fantastic and absurd and they should be countered vigorously. Then again this allegation of our intervention in Indonesia is even more baseless.⁷ If there is something we are definitely proud of and in which we have helped the cause of freedom, it is our advice and activity in regard to Indonesia. If the communist policy in Indonesia had been followed, the Dutch would be in full control of this situation.

The Conference we held in January last about Indonesia was not only convened entirely at our own instance but to the surprise and apprehension of U.S.A. and U.K.

If any explanation is needed, it is by us from the Soviet Government for the continued and deliberate falsehoods propagated in the press there. Undoubtedly these irritate, but we do not propose to allow them to affect our policy in the least. What we are worried about is a certain reaction on Indian public opinion which naturally dislikes this perverted criticism in the Soviet press. We have tried and we shall continue to try to pursue an independent policy of friendliness with the U.K., U.S.A., etc., on the one hand, the U.S.S.R. on the other, even though the response from either side may not be satisfactory. But the response affects public opinion here and this results in pressure being brought upon us to vary our policy.

I can well understand that the Soviet approach to these problems is different. I do not expect them to appreciate our way of dealing with them. I can also understand their deep suspicion of other countries like the U.S.A. and U.K. But I would expect an attempt at least to avoid a completely perverted view of looking at our activities and our motives. However we shall try to continue functioning according to our own lines and to the best of our ability, and not be diverted by these outbursts in the Soviet press.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. In October 1949, several critical comments about India's policy had appeared in the Soviet press. On 12 October, the *New Times* wrote, "The vacancy left by Chiang Kai-shek is being offered to Nehru. The flattering attention the imperialist powers are paying to India and the hopes they repose in her in the matter of fighting the national liberation movement in the Asiatic countries, bore no good for Indian people." The *Izvestiya*, in an article named "In search of a New Agent," on 23 October quoted from Nehru's speech on 13 October that, "India and the U.S.A. are guided by common 'ideas'". The paper commented—the 'idea' of American ruling circles, "is the economic enslavement of India and the merciful exploitation of the Indian people." Criticising the Government of India's policy *Pravda* wrote on 23 October that the "recent period has been marked by a series of most cruel repression against members of the labour movement and against the trade unions. The prisons are filled with Communists, with the people who have taken part in the national liberation movement and with the trade unionists."
7. About the Indonesian Conference held in New Delhi in January 1949 *Pravda* commented, "this conference ... was devoted to discussing the question of how to suppress the national liberation movement in South East Asia, and not to assist it."

2. To S. Radhakrishnan¹

New Delhi
February 6, 1950

My dear Radhakrishnan,

I have three letters from you dated 24th January.

I am sorry that you are suffering so much from the winter. I am afraid that these winter conditions will continue for at least two months more.

I think that the idea of having a pact of friendship with Soviet Russia is worth exploring. There is no doubt that any approach of this kind on our part will probably irritate and annoy and may be even a little frighten the U.S.A. and the U.K. Chiefly because of the Kashmir issue, a certain coldness has crept in in regard to our relations with the U.S.A. Or perhaps it might be said that the fact that I did not commit myself to their policy when I was in the U.S.A. itself had a certain reaction on them, which was not very favourable to us. They had gone all out to welcome me and I am very grateful to them for it and expressed myself so. But they expected something more than gratitude and goodwill and that more I could not supply them.

The U.S.A. and indeed the U.K. policy in regard to Kashmir has grown more and more pro-Pakistan and we have naturally resented this and told them so. No doubt this also has not pleased them. The situation is a developing one. I hope that soon our Ambassador will be going to China. Thus in a sense, events are pushing us away a little from the U.S.A. politically. Our attitude in Indo-China has also displeased them and the U.K.

Perhaps it would be advisable to go a little slow just at present to see how things shape themselves. But there is no reason why some mention might not be made of a pact of friendship with Soviet Russia. That pact would of course be completely non-committal, like our pact with Afghanistan.

I am asking Bajpai to look into this matter and to write to you more about it.³

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Radhakrishnan's interview with Stalin on 14 January 1950 indicated the prospects of a new relationship between India and the Soviet Union. He wished that a treaty of friendship between two countries on the basis of good-neighbourly relations and mutual respect should be negotiated.

3. See also *ante*, pp. 204-205.

FOREIGN POLICY
VI. Indonesia

1. To A. Soekarno¹

New Delhi

December 22, 1949

My dear Soekarno,

I am sending you separately two formal or semi-formal letters, one will be delivered by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and the other by Dr P. Subbarayan, our Ambassador-designate.

It has long been my earnest desire to meet you both for personal and public reasons. Even though we have not met, we have been attracted to one another and the close bonds of friendship have tied us. Fate brought us and our countries nearer to each other during the last few years and I believe that fate or circumstance or whatever it may be, intends to bring us closer still in the future.

I wanted to meet you to discuss many problems of common interest to our countries. The world is full of problems and Asia today is a fascinating question mark. Inevitably India and Indonesia will have to play an ever-increasing part in the development of Asia. Though it has been denied to me to visit you at this historic moment, I trust that before very long we shall meet. I shall try to go to Indonesia sometime during the next year, though I fear it cannot be soon. It is difficult for me to leave India in the near future, because the problems that face us are formidable.

I hope that you will not hesitate to visit us whenever you have the opportunity to do so.² You will always be welcome.

Among the many problems that face both Indonesia and India are China and Indo-China. You will permit me to say a few words about these, because I want you to understand how our mind works in these matters.

What has happened in China is obviously of tremendous significance to Asia and the world. It does not matter much whether we like it or dislike it. It is a fact which cannot be ignored. Probably in the course of a few days or weeks, a number of countries will recognise the new regime in China. We propose to do so by the end of this month, probably on the 30th December. I expect that the United Kingdom will also recognise China early in January and so also probably Canada, Australia, etc. The U.S.A. are not likely to take any such step for some time, though it will be difficult for them to avoid recognition for very long.³ But their pride has been hurt and their prestige has suffered because of events in China and a powerful body of opinion in America is opposed to any recognition at present. Even in

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Soekarno and his wife were in India from 23 to 29 January 1950.

3. The United States was unwilling to take an early decision and continued to recognise the Kuomintang Government. It did not reply to an official request of the People's Republic for recognition. The American Secretary of State had remarked that the events in China were "the product of internal Chinese forces."

America there are many in the Government itself, who are in favour of recognition. But there are others, notably the powerful Defence Services, who do not favour this and the latter are likely to prevail.

What does recognition signify? There appears to be a tendency among some of the countries who will recognise China, to do so in a formal way, because they could not help it and at the same time to treat her as almost an unfriendly State. That seems to me a peculiarly unwise policy, because it leads nowhere. It is true that it might be difficult to be very friendly and cooperative with the new Chinese regime. Indeed, so far as I am concerned, I have been publicly condemned by them. But I have attached little importance to this and considered it an exuberance of a victorious revolution. In any event personal matters should not interfere with public policy.

My own opinion is that we should offer our restrained friendship to the new China. We must keep our dignity and we must not submit to any affront. But generally speaking, we should be friendly and cooperative, unless we differ on a particular issue. It is not our business to interfere in China, just as it is not the Chinese business to interfere with us.

As you must be aware, our general policy has been not to line up with any group of nations as against another group. We have not lined up with the Soviet group and indeed we cannot do so. But we have avoided doing or saying anything hostile to that group. At the same time we have not lined up with the American or British group as against the Soviet group. Our relations with the United States and with the United Kingdom are friendly. But I made it perfectly clear during my visit to the United States that we would follow an independent foreign policy. No other policy is wise or even expedient or possible for us.

We shall apply that test to our relations with China and we do not propose to line up with any activity which may appear to be against China. I mention this because repeated attempts have been made during the past few months to build up some kind of a front against China. We have kept clear of them. It is possible that these attempts may continue in the future and it is also possible that some countries might try to bring Indonesia into such a front. I trust that Indonesia will avoid any such entanglements.

In regard to Indo-China, I am quite clear in my mind that French policy has been very unwise and completely unsuccessful. Their attempt to put up Bao Dai has failed and the future is not likely to bring any greater success. There is a tendency on the part of some great powers to help the Bao Dai regime. We have steered clear of these entanglements and have avoided any recognition of Bao Dai. Our policy is that it is for the people of Indo-China to decide and we have no business to interfere.

I think that developments will take place in Indo-China soon, because of the effects of the Chinese revolution. These developments are not likely to be to the advantage of the French or of Bao Dai.

The U.S.A. and the U.K. for a long time followed a policy in Asia which ignored the progressive elements in Asia and still clung to the support of some imperialist regimes. You know how this policy worked in Indonesia for sometime. Gradually some wisdom dawned upon them and they partly varied their policy in Indonesia. They are more conscious now of the new Asia, but even now they stick to some old conceptions, which have no validity today. Hence their policy is sometimes self-contradictory and it is difficult to understand the logic of it.

The Soviet Union and their satellite countries constantly say that India is a tool of Anglo-America.³ That of course is nonsense. But unfortunately the Soviet people think in straight lines and imagine that whoever is not with them is against them. The fact is that we have very friendly relations with the U.S.A. and the U.K. But it is clearly understood by both of them that we shall follow our own policy and judge each issue on the merits.

The United Kingdom have not quite got out of the habit of thinking in old terms. They try to build up some kind of a bloc in the Middle East, imagining that they can play up religious sentiments and not realising that other forces are at play.

I have written to you frankly, because we shall have to face these problems together in the future.

With all good wishes to you for the New Year,

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. *New Times*, published from Moscow, attacked the Congress leadership in September 1949: "Congress leaders have made a deal with Anglo-American imperialism and Indian reactionaries to fight their own people. Now the struggle for real independence of India, for the interests of the labouring masses is continuing, outside the Congress and against it."

2. To A. Soekarno¹

New Delhi
28 February 1950

Dear Dr Soekarno,

Thank you for your letter of February 14.² I cannot tell you how happy all of us

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Soekarno had thanked Nehru for the hospitality, warmth, friendship and fraternity he was shown during his stay in India. It had also contributed to "my insight of Asian relations in particular and world affairs in general. Indeed, my whole outlook on current affairs has been enriched tremendously in the brief scope of my visit."

were to have you and Padma with us for a few days. I am afraid we treated you rather informally and did not lay too much stress on the official aspect. But you were so much of us that it was difficult to treat you merely as distinguished strangers. As you say, you fitted in completely not only in our general environment but in our family circle. I felt that it was better that way than to stress the official aspect of your visit. If and when I come to Indonesia, I hope that I shall have the pleasure and privilege of being treated in the same way there, that is to say with as little as possible of official ceremony and as much as possible of friendly and family contacts.

I have long thought that the whole course of history, both of the distant and recent past, inevitably brings our two countries together. That course of events can be somewhat checked by personalities and their relationship to one another. Fortunately for us, you and I as individuals, have so much in common that we take to each other spontaneously. That is good for both of us and for our respective countries.

I am greatly looking forward to the possibility of my visiting Indonesia. Unfortunately I am so tied up with a situation which tends to become critical all the time, that it is exceedingly difficult for me to be positive and definite about future programme. But I shall make every endeavour to come and visit you. As far as I can see about the end of May might be suitable time.

I have found that our little Naval Squadron intends cruising about South East Asia about that time. Our sailors have expressed a keen desire to have me on board. I am afraid I cannot take a long trip as they suggest. But it might be possible for me to go by sea from Singapore to Indonesia. Our sailors are a bright lot and I like them very much.

Our Ambassador, Dr Subbarayan, will be going to Indonesia soon and I hope to send you with him a pair of field glasses made in India. This is one of our first attempts at making these things, probably it is the very first of its kind made in India. I am trying to get for your children an electric train. We could not get it anywhere here in India of the kind I wanted. So I have asked our High Commissioner in London to try to get it.

Vijayalakshmi has gone back to the United States.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

FOREIGN POLICY

VII. Portuguese Enclave in Goa

1. No Quibbling on the Issue of Goa¹

Regarding the memorandum of the Minister for Portugal on the opening of an Indian bank in Goa, I think that we should not allow the matter to rest there.² We should pursue it still further. Before we do this, we should refer the matter to the Ministry of Finance. I do not think we should allow any such matter to be concluded by a refusal by the Portuguese Government. It is true that we cannot start a bank without their consent, but there is no reason why we should accept their refusal as final.

I have read the note of the Deputy Secretary on his interview with the Minister for Portugal.³ It would have been better if this subject had been dealt with the Minister at higher level. In view of Dr Salazar's speech⁴ delivered on the 21st October, I think we should send a written memorandum to the Portuguese Government through our Minister in Lisbon (copy to the Minister for Portugal here). In this memorandum⁵ we should express our appreciation that the old question of "Padroado" is being settled in accordance with our wishes. We should however point out quite clearly that the Government of India cannot, in view of the changed circumstances accept the present position in regard to Goa or any other foreign territory in India. They are desirous of settling this question peacefully and by agreement. But it should be clearly understood that the present position is incongruous and totally unacceptable.

Both our Minister at Lisbon and our Consul General in Goa should be informed that in regard to Goa our attitude should be clear, definite and precise and there is no necessity for quibbling on this issue.

1. Note to the Secretary General and the Foreign Secretary, 17 November 1949. File No.19(82)-Dur I/49, p.22/note, M.E.A. & C.R., N.A.I.
2. The Minister for Portugal, V.V. Garin, had pointed out that his Government "do not permit any foreign bank to operate in its territories without licence", and had also observed that, "an Indian bank could not function usefully under existing conditions."
3. In course of a conversation with S.K. Banerjee on 12 November 1949, the Portuguese Minister said that according to the Portuguese Constitution, Goa was an integral part of Portugal, and there was no distinction of any kind between the Goanese and the Portuguese, and there was no public agitation in Goa against the Portuguese. He cited the example of America and Spain who had never insisted that other colonial powers should leave the continents after liberation.
4. Salazar spoke of the campaigns in India for the integration of Goa with India.
5. Early in 1950 the Government of India sent a note to the Portuguese Government in Lisbon, asking that the Portuguese possessions in India might be transferred to the Indian Union. It was also suggested that the method of transfer be through a plebiscite. The Portuguese Government sent a reply refusing to discuss the question of transfer of sovereignty at all. Meanwhile, the Portuguese Government issued a decree freeing all political prisoners by an amnesty. The Padroado system by which the Portuguese Government had rights of ecclesiastical patronage in India was also abolished.

2. Policy towards Goa¹

Our policy in regard to Goa has been one of almost complete inaction and passivity. That was justifiable for some time, because we were busy with other things. But two and a half years of it is not easy to justify, more especially when the attitude of the Portuguese Government is an aggressive and sometimes insulting one.

I think, therefore, that we must frame a definite policy now and go ahead with it both in Lisbon and in Goa. The recent report received from our Minister in Lisbon about his interview with Dr Salazar did not create a good impression upon me. The report did not deal with any political issue and there was nothing in it which could be taken exception to, as it stood. But the approach of our Minister and his reactions seemed to him to be wrong. He appeared to be overwhelmed by the courtesy and simplicity of Dr Salazar and seemed to ignore the political background of Portugal as well as the question of Goa and how Portuguese authorities function there. This seemed to show a certain lack of political sense. Before the Minister left Delhi for Lisbon, I had a talk with him on the subject of our relations with Portugal and impressed upon him the political aspect and that we proposed to take some definite action fairly soon. I pointed out to him that we could not continue our soft and yielding attitude any more. There is no particular point in our Minister being in Lisbon merely to exchange courtesies. Indeed that is definitely harmful from our point of view.

It is necessary therefore to draw up a definite and clear policy and send precise instructions to our Minister in Lisbon. The time has come when a written note should be presented to the Portuguese Government making it clear that in the new order of things what is called Portuguese India must necessarily be incorporated in the rest of India and that we are prepared to initiate conversation on this subject. I do not think we should raise any question of referendum or plebiscite.

Apart from this major issue, it appears that the Portuguese authorities in Goa are continually harassing our people and sometimes going as far as almost insulting them.² Mrs Pandit was in Goa for some days and what she has told me of what she saw and heard there has somewhat surprised and distressed me. I understand that some cases of discourteous behaviour by the Portuguese Government to our

1. Note to the Secretary-General, Ministry of External Affairs, 5 February 1950. J.N. Collection.

2. In 1946 a nonviolent movement, with the object of securing civil liberties for the people was initiated in Goa under the leadership of Rammanohar Lohia. The satyagraha, however, proved ineffective in the face of mounting repression and several leaders were deported to Portugal after trial by a military court. The Goan National Congress continued to agitate for the end of Portuguese rule. The Goan representative in the National Assembly in Lisbon urged the grant of autonomy to the Portuguese possessions in India.

nationals have been reported from time to time by our Consul General there to the Ministry. None of these have been brought to my notice, as they should have been. In one or two instances I believe some action was taken. In any event I want these matters to be brought to my notice now. It is essential that our attitude in regard to any matter which involves our prestige or any discourtesy to any Indian national must be a firm one and an adequate apology should be demanded.

In determining our general policy towards the Portuguese authorities in Goa, we should also consider the economic relations of Goa with the rest of India, so that in case of need we may take such steps as might be felt by the Portuguese authorities. Our Ministry should get in touch with other Ministries concerned in order to find out what is possible and what should be done, when need arises.

3. Portuguese Indians¹

Mr Rafi Ahmed Kidwai has perhaps somewhat misunderstood the scope of our proposal. The Portuguese Government have been subjecting Indian nationals to a certain process which we consider definitely objectionable and which inconveniences them greatly. Apart from this, the Portuguese Government have been treating our nationals discourteously. We do not wish to be discourteous to any person, but there is no reason why we should submit to Portuguese treatment of Indian nationals and not take any action in regard to Portuguese nationals entering India. Those Portuguese nationals may be Portuguese by race or Indians. It is true that some of these people have taken advantage of Indian nationality while retaining Portuguese nationality. They want the best of both worlds. They will have to choose soon as to which nationality they wish to retain. They cannot be nationals of two countries at the same time. Those who consider themselves Portuguese nationals will have to submit to the same process as Indian nationals entering Goa. Unless we take some such action, the Portuguese Government in Goa will continue to treat our nationals with disrespect and discourtesy. It is for us to consider what other action we may take also. But meanwhile, the proposal suggested should be given effect to. Indeed there is little choice in the matter, as we have informed the Portuguese Government that we shall do something of this kind.

This note together with Mr Kidwai's note should be circulated to Cabinet.

1. Note to Cabinet Secretary, 19 February 1950. Cabinet Secretariat Papers.

FOREIGN POLICY

VIII. Relations with Other Countries

1 Situation in Nepal¹

This matter² should be further investigated by our Law Department. Unless the facts and law are quite clear, extradition should not be permitted. There can be little doubt that the case is of a political nature. That fact alone is not enough in case a criminal offence has been committed. But that fact puts us on special enquiry. We cannot allow people to be extradited to suffer for their political opinions or activities. Conditions in Nepal are in a ferment and political prisoners have been treated very badly. Their Penal Code is also archaic. Therefore, very special care has to be taken that Indian nationals are not subjected to this Penal Code and procedure and the conditions in Nepal. There is always a danger of a political offender being proceeded against under the cloak of a criminal case.

2. Therefore, pending further and full enquiry no extradition should take place. The Nepal Government should be asked to produce proof as regards the facts. It is not enough to make a charge.

3. If the Bihar Government or the Magistrate are satisfied, the persons can be let out on bail pending investigation.

1. Note to the Principal Private Secretary, 26 December 1949. File No.33(60)/48-PMS.
2. The members of the Nepali National Congress, such as Krishna Prasad, backed by the Indian Socialists under Rammanohar Lohia, were carrying on agitation from India against the autocratic rule of Mohan Shumsher in Nepal. The Rana, however, wanted the Government of India to extradite Krishna Prasad and other offenders who had taken shelter in India.

2. India and Sri Lanka¹

I apologise for not being able to speak in Tamil or Sinhalese. Whenever I have come to this beautiful island, your people have tried to spoil me by their kindness. It is a pleasant sensation to be spoiled, but I often wonder whether it is good for me to have so much of this business of spoiling. I feel greatly embarrassed when

1. Speech at a public reception, Colombo, 15 January 1950. From *The Hindu*, 16 January 1950.

I turn over in my own mind the measure of what we resolved to achieve and what we have actually achieved. I find a great gap between these. So I am not sure whether I deserve all the praise that has been showered on me in the course of the address presented by the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

I want to speak to you as a friend what I have in my heart, as I am a little troubled about this matter of the people on the labour force in Ceylon, who came from India long years ago to live their lives here, as much a part of Ceylon as anybody else and whose future is in doubt.²

I urge that these people, that this very fine body of men and women who have laboured in this country and done their part in building up the country, be given the freedom of this country.

I do not wish on this occasion to go into the problems that face this great labour force which has done much in this country, because I have been anxious above everything else, that India and Lanka should cooperate as far as possible in everything and have the friendliest of relations. When I point out the problems of Indian estate workers I do so not as the Prime Minister of India, but as an old friend and colleague.

I would refer, in a casual way, to some people who seem to fear that India may wish to envelop or absorb Ceylon. I assure you that any person who has such an idea is completely wrong. It is completely wrong for a variety of reasons. I do not think any responsible person in India thinks about it. Apart from that the whole policy of India is of a different kind and I am convinced in my own mind that any such thought or attempt is not good either for India or Ceylon. Let your mind be clear about it.

On the other hand, it seems to me quite inevitable and right that there should be the closest relationship and cooperation between India and Lanka. Geography compels it. Our history and common culture make it inevitable. So I feel that neither India nor Lanka should take any step which comes in the way of impairing the cordial and fruitful relations.

I have tried my utmost not to say or do any thing unwise and I am pleased that the Government of Ceylon must feel that way too. So when problems arise, as they have arisen, they should not be difficult of solution when both parties concerned feel that way. I refer to this subject with great hesitation because it was not my desire to interfere in any way, but I am speaking at the moment not as the Prime Minister of India but as an old friend and colleague, whom you have taken to your hearts on previous occasions also. I earnestly hope that this fine body of men and women—I mean the workers on the plantations who have become part and parcel of Ceylon—will be given every consideration in this country.

2. Under the Ceylon Village Communities Ordinance, some 5,000,000 Indian labourers, who were concentrated on the tea estates of Sri Lanka's highlands, were disfranchised.



WITH SIR ARCHIBALD AND LADY NYE, JANUARY 1950



WITH LOY W. HENDERSON, NEW DELHI, 2 FEBRUARY 1950

I warn against looking at national problems in a narrow spirit. I want you to think of the future of Ceylon in the larger context of changing Asia. Neither India nor Ceylon can be in isolation today, but should think in terms of the big movements taking place in Asia and the rest of the world.

The problem before India and Ceylon today is to bring about the economic advance of the masses of people and, at the same time, maintain the democratic structure of society.

If you have a democratic structure which does not bring that advance, then that democracy has failed just as much as any other political structure which fails to give political freedom to people would also have failed.

Since I last visited Ceylon, ten years ago, the world picture has changed tremendously. India and Ceylon have achieved freedom in this period.

Achievement of political freedom is a great thing, but I have always thought of this freedom in the social and economic sense also. My politics has always lain with the masses, with millions living in the villages of India, and I always thought of freedom as something which will relieve the masses of their poverty. When I find that the burden is not removed from the masses, I grow impatient and ask myself whether I am following the right road.

The basic problem which we face in India today, and presumably in Ceylon also, is that of a new social relationship that has to emerge in the new context. The standard of living of the masses should be raised. If anything comes in the way of this that should be removed.

We have been considering in the Commonwealth Conference in the past week these problems. There can be no solution of the problems facing us unless our policies are related to the advance of the common people.

I emphasise that Government policies can never have anything of trickery or jugglery about them. A wrong act by an individual or Government leads to wrong results. This is what our great leader—father of our nation—Mahatma Gandhi taught us. Mahatma Gandhi taught India to shed fear and be brave. If you look around perhaps the most obvious thing you see is this dominating fear. There is fear in the international field. People are afraid of war and everywhere people are afraid of something or other. Pakistan is afraid of India. India is apprehensive of Pakistan. There are possibly people who think India might swallow Ceylon. And then there is the East to West conflict in Europe. There is again fear of communism and communist countries complain of being encircled. Everybody is afraid of everybody else. It may be that fear in one or the other is well-founded. But I cannot understand this vicious circle of fear.

Mahatma Gandhi has taught us to overcome this fear of domination by a powerful country. People in India were afraid. But then Mahatma Gandhi came on the scene. There was magic in his message and a very strange change came over the country. People in large numbers ceased to be afraid of the foreign power. Mahatma Gandhi lifted from the people the tremendous burden of fear.

I therefore urge that the Gandhian way should be applied to practical politics of the world today. I agree, however, that Governments cannot always function in this way. A Government can go only as far as the people would allow it to go.

I made a passing remark in the earlier part of my speech to the possible fear in some quarters about India's intentions towards Ceylon. Let me assure you that any such notion about India is completely wrong for a variety of reasons. No responsible person in India thinks on these lines. Our whole policy is of a different kind and I am convinced in my mind that no such attempt will ever be made by India.

3. U.S. Concern at Communist Expansion in South East Asia¹

....It is not a matter of India's agreement or disagreement with the United States regarding their policy in South East Asia.² It was really a question of approach to the problem. The approach of leaders of thought in India was determined largely by their background of recent history. They do not wish to criticize the approach of other Governments to a problem which does not immediately affect them. They are inclined to take rather a detached view and desire not to get entangled in matters which do not immediately affect them. In the case of problems of Asia, they are rather in an advantageous position on account of their psychological connections with other countries in Asia who have passed through a phase of colonial domination. The psychology of Asian nations is one of intense nationalism and inclination to resent any action which might be understood or represented as "intervention" by foreign or Western powers. For any correct approach it is, therefore, necessary to take into account this state of mind of the Asian people.

So far as Russia and communism are concerned, the approach of the eastern peoples has been governed by the instinct of broad sympathy for the underdog. Immediately after the First World War, broadly speaking, the Indian people's approach to Russia was of sympathy because of their being subjected to intervention by the Western powers. There was also some attraction to the fact that the standards of the Central Asian people had been raised very quickly by the Russian Revolution. Later, when the purges began in Russia, there was revulsion against the communist methods practised in Russia. It may be said that at present Indian public sympathy

1. Note by A.V. Pai, Principal Private Secretary, of Jawaharlal Nehru's remarks in his talks with Loy Henderson on 8 February 1950. J.N. Collection. Extracts.
2. Loy Henderson wanted to know whether Nehru had any suggestions which might help the U.S. Government to meet the situation in South East Asia because of the possibility of communists moving south from China.

with Russia and communism is at the lowest. If there should be a war, the Prime Minister was quite sure that the Indian public would not stand for entry into the war on the side of Russia....

The Prime Minister then went on to deal with the approach of U.K. and U.S.A.—particularly U.K. in the Middle East. He could understand their trying to keep communist influence out of the Middle East countries but the way they were getting about it appeared to him to be to back up Islamic reaction and the rule of reactionary governments.³

The Prime Minister then went on to explain how backing up reactions to stem communism produces queer consequences. He instanced Nepal and pointed out that the progressive and reformist people in Nepal were now slowly turning their minds to China. The great advantage that Russia has is that it can always pose as a “liberator” of oppressed peoples. In Nepal the common people looked to India as their liberator from the reactionary regime. They now slowly tend to look to China for their liberation.⁴

The Prime Minister next spoke about U.S. policy regarding Kashmir again to illustrate the importance of approach and understanding of the psychology of persons with whom one deals.

Mr Acheson’s message on Kashmir, for example, was extraordinary. It was an attempt to bring pressure to bear on the Government of India by means of threats of dire consequences. The present Government of India consists of men who have been trained during the struggle against the British to refuse to submit to coercion in any shape or form. Any attempt to press them with threats causes immediate reaction, the consequences of which will be exactly the opposite to those intended.⁵

3. Henderson agreed that this was so, but in this matter the American policy had been determined rather by the U.K. approach. He agreed that it could be justly criticised as reactionary but he pointed out that in the West Asia countries there were no really progressive parties and the choice lay only between the extreme reactionary regimes and downright communists.
4. Henderson agreed that the position in Nepal was very queer, where the ruling class is something in between the King and the people.
5. Henderson rather apologetically explained that the phrasing of Acheson’s message was unfortunate and was, possibly, due to the influence of persons in the State Department who dealt with procedural matters than with policy matters.

4. Recognition of Israel¹

This question of recognition of Israel will have to be tackled by us sometime or other. For the present we need not raise it so long as the Security Council is dealing with the Kashmir matter. But we cannot wait indefinitely.

1. Note to the Secretary-General, M.E.A., New Delhi, 12 February 1950. File No.46(15)-AWT/48. M.E.A., N.A.I.

We are frequently getting warnings from the Arab countries about the danger or undesirability of our recognising Israel. The latest came from Cairo from our Ambassador.² I think it might be worthwhile informing our Ambassador in Cairo as well as other heads of Missions concerned in this that the present position is anomalous and embarrassing. Because of our desire not to do anything which might come in the way of a suitable settlement between the Arab countries and Israel, we have deliberately refrained from recognising Israel. But the fact remains that Israel is a member of the United Nations and we have to deal with it from day to day there as such a member. It is not clear to us how can we refuse to recognise a country, which is a member of the United Nations. Recognition does not mean accepting any policy of Israel. Indeed it might lead towards some solution of the problem there, which we hope might be acceptable to the Arabs. In spite of these considerations, we are not recognising Israel for the present, because of our consideration for Arab feelings.

I suggest that something on the above lines might be sent to our Ambassadors so that they can deal with this matter whenever it arises.

2. A.A.A. Fyzee.

5. Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon¹

Paragraph two of your telegram No. 3357 dated 12th March. No objection to your mentioning to H.M.G. that Government of India are concerned about racial implications of Seretse² incident and its repercussions on Commonwealth relations.³ This is not meant as interference in U.K. affairs but as communication conceived in friendly spirit of real concern over matter which has international significance.

1. New Delhi, 14 March 1950. V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Seretse M. Khama (1921-1980); Prime Minister of Bechuanaland, 1965-66; first President, Republic of Botswana, 1966-80.
3. Seretse Khama, chieftain-designate of Bamangwato tribe of Bechuanaland, married Ruth Williams, an English woman, in 1948. The British Government did not accept the marriage and exiled them and his regent and uncle and advised a period of direct rule for Bamangwato. A White Paper was published on 22 March giving reasons for banning Seretse and his wife from Bechuanaland for five years. Britain faced severe criticism for this action.

6. To Vijayalakshmi Pandit¹

New Delhi
March 21, 1950

Dear Nan,

I have just received your letter of March 13th. Yesterday I sent you a letter, which has gone by bag. This letter will go by the ordinary post, as this probably is swifter.

About the Baguio Conference,² the *New York Times* has created some misapprehension. It is perfectly true that we are not keen on this conference for a variety of reasons and we do not think it will serve any great purpose. It might perhaps do some little harm. As a matter of fact we are just not in a position to attend conferences in view of the present situation in India, which is likely to continue in a very critical state and might even go worse. Nevertheless, we have said that we have no desire to avoid attending this conference, and if it is held, we shall try to send some representative. I doubt very much if such a representative can be a Minister. There is no chance whatever of my going.

The Consultative Committee of the Commonwealth Conference to consider plans for the economic development of South East Asia is due to meet in Canberra about the middle of May. We do not like this either and it is very inconvenient for anyone to go there from here. We tried to get this postponed, but did not succeed. Now that it is going to be held, we have said that we shall send a representative, but it may or may not be a Minister.

I am passing on your letter to Bajpai. I understand that B.N. Rau will be coming here soon. We shall discuss the question of our representative on the Security Council with him.

Yours,
Jawahar

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Representatives of Australia, Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines were to meet at Baguio, the summer capital of Philippines in May 1950 to consider ways to advance peace through economic, political and cultural collaboration.

10

MISCELLANEOUS

I. Personal

1. To Eleanor Roosevelt¹

New Delhi
December 15, 1949

My dear Mrs Roosevelt,

Your letter of November 8 has somehow taken a long time to reach me. Apparently it missed me in some place and followed me about. I am very grateful for what you have written.

It was a great joy not only to meet you but to meet you in Hyde Park² with all its associations. I was looking forward to meeting you again before I left, but unfortunately this could not be arranged.

My visit to the United States has done me a lot of good and I think I can say with truth that it has gone some way to bringing understanding and appreciation between the peoples of India and the United States. That is some achievement. For me this visit was a wonderful experience and I liked every part of it. I certainly found not only generosity and warm-heartedness but also a basic democracy among the people. That is indeed a good omen for the future of the world.

I am sorry you will not be able to come to India during this winter. I do hope that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you here early in 1951.

With all warm regards and every good wish for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

2. See *Selected Works* (Second Series), Vol.13, p. 312.

2. To Mrs Henry F. Grady¹

New Delhi
December 20, 1949

My dear Mrs Grady,²

It was delightful to get your letter and to have news of you. All of us here remember you frequently, for you have left a powerful impression on people's minds. Those who give affection receive it abundantly and you gave most generously.

1. J.N. Collection.

2. Wife of Henry F. Grady, the first U.S. Ambassador to India.

My own fear is that what you say about me might upset the equilibrium of my mind and turn my head completely. Fortunately, as you know, I spend a little time every day standing on my head. That helps me to keep a little sober.

I am so glad that Rita is going to spend Christmas with you. When I saw her five weeks ago in London, she was already full of it. I envy her this visit.

You write to me about Herbert Elliston,³ the Editor of the *Washington Post*. It was rather a curious coincidence that the night before I got your letter, he and his wife were dining with me. I liked them both and we had a good talk.

I think you are right in saying that some part of you remains in India. Certainly it remains in our minds and hearts.

With all good wishes to you and Dr Grady for Christmas and the New Year,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Herbert Elliston (1895-1957); worked for the *New York Sun*, *New York Herald* and *Christian Science Monitor*; editor of the *Washington Post*, 1940-53.

3. To Manny Strauss¹

New Delhi
December 21, 1949

Dear Mr Strauss,²

I have been shown by Mr C.D. Deshmukh, our financial representative in Europe and America, the correspondence that has passed between you and him relating to the quickest and most effective way in which American resources and goodwill could be utilised to help India improve her economic position and thereby contribute to the promotion of world peace. As a result of this correspondence and the talks that you two have had on the subject, you offer to demonstrate how by the application of American resources, skill and enterprise and the stimulation of local efforts and collaboration, a moderate-sized Indian town could be transformed into prosperous and progressive centre of urban life, radiating a beneficent influence on the surrounding countryside. Apart from the will to improve and whole-hearted

1. J.N. Collection.
2. (1884-1957); an American business consultant who assisted many charitable endeavours including A Century of Peace From Today, a foundation to aid the United Nations and similar movements to promote world peace; also helped in raising funds for the victims of World War I, Jewish refugees and various theatre movements.

cooperation, you expect no contribution from the Indian side except such fee as the Government of India may wish to pay to you as the sponsor of the project, a fee which you intend to apply to the implementation of the project itself.

The cause of world peace is as close to my heart as yours, and I hold the conviction with fervour that India has a vital role to play in the promotion of that cause. The menace of the atom bomb appears to be perhaps the most tragic development in man's history. Mankind seems to me to be at the crossroads, where a wrong choice would have consequences too fearful to contemplate. The choice before humanity is starkly between advancing human civilisation by a thousand years in one splendid jump by the use of atomic power for constructive purposes and putting it back by a thousand years by its misuse for purposes of destruction.

I regard it as a matter of life and death for the world to devise every possible means for ensuring a right decision and among these means, the highest priority must be accorded to the elimination of the most fertile source of clash of ideologies and consequent war, namely economic distress in large areas of the world such as India with its teeming population.

The simplicity of conception of your project has struck my imagination. It has a refreshing practicality behind it that contrasts with the complexities besetting more formal approaches to the problem of Indo-American economic cooperation. Needless to say, I whole-heartedly approve of your project and I am prepared to secure for it all the cooperation that you will need and expect in implementing it.

The tentative choice of a town for the purpose of the project, namely Wardha, suggested by Mr Deshmukh, has *prima facie* many merits; but it is possible to conceive of one or two disadvantages which I should like a little time to investigate. I shall also be giving some thought to possible alternatives. It would help us to make the final choice if you could arrange for a representative of yours to visit India as soon as convenient for surveying possible locations and the relative opportunities they offer for successful experiment and consulting with us on the subject.

To one wedded, as you seem to be, to a great cause, approbation of others for what you are doing must be quite an irrelevance. But before I close I cannot help expressing my admiration for the selflessness that inspires your work, a selflessness reflected in your offer to devote any fee that we may pay you to the project itself. Perhaps, as the project develops, I will have the pleasure of welcoming you to India and making your personal acquaintance.

I send you my good wishes for the New Year and express the hope that this year will bring some achievement in the cause of world peace.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. To Saraswati¹

New Delhi
December 25, 1949

Dear Saraswati,²

I have your letter of the 14th December³ and I have read it with care. I cannot answer you at length, because you raise very big problems. There is a great deal in this country which is sad, and no doubt we are often to blame for it. But in other countries also conditions have been bad since the War because of the great upset caused by the War. Here we had another upset because of the partition. People complain of conditions in India. In many ways these conditions, even about food etc., are much better than in England today. We have got into a habit of complaining about other people's works and not doing much ourselves.

The food position has definitely improved in the country. But the real thing is that people, and young people especially, should think in terms of what they could do themselves, however little it is, instead of expecting any Government to do everything.

In any event, do not get disheartened. You have got your life before you and you must face it bravely and with confidence.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. A resident of Varanasi at this time.
3. Saraswati had raised several problems faced by the country and the Congress and the people's disappointment at the Government's handling of these issues. She had sought Nehru's guidance for a constructive programme.

5. To Sri Prakasa¹

New Delhi
December 27, 1949

My dear Prakasa,

You were good enough to send me a quotation from your father's² book *Manava Dharma Sara* which contained a reference to Kashmir. I was interested to read this. In spite of the people turning Muslim in Kashmir, most of them observed Hindu customs till quite recently. I remember this even in my boyhood. There is a story that they wanted to revert to Hinduism and sent a deputation to Banaras

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Bhagavandas.

at the instance of Maharaja Gulab Singh. The Banaras Pandits, however, said this could not be done.

Thank you for the present you sent me with Lady Nye. The orchids, however, did not survive the journey.

I read about your meeting with the Banaras Pandits and your letter to Rajaji. I agree with you that we should be friendly and courteous to these people but I fear the world is changing too fast for them and we cannot save them from the shock.

As far as the Hindu Code Bill is concerned, we shall probably make some alterations and soften it. In any event it is largely permissive. So where is the question of coercion.

I am glad you met the two Nyes. I like both of them and Colleen Nye is a particular friend.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

6. To Algot Bagge¹

New Delhi
February 4, 1950

My dear Justice Bagge,²

Your letter of February 2nd³ from Bombay was delivered to me this morning. You have written in such generous terms that it is a little difficult for me to thank you. I had hoped to meet you again before you left India and we had fixed up some time in the evening. Later when your aircraft was delayed, I thought you might be able to join us at a ballet performance. Unfortunately you came too late for any of these and so, to my regret, we missed you.

I am happy to know that your stay in my country was pleasant and agreeable and that your reactions were very friendly. India is a very old and curious country, full of contradictions, as old countries are. It is possible to find the good in India and it is equally possible to see the bad in it. Everything depends on how you approach it and what you look for. It is evident that you sought the good in this

1. J.N. Collection.
2. Algot Fredrik Johan Bagge (1875-1971); Swedish lawyer; Judge, Supreme Court of Sweden, 1930-43; headed the judicial tribunal set up under the December 1948 Agreement for resolving the boundary disputes between East Bengal in Pakistan and West Bengal and Assam in India.
3. Bagge had thanked Nehru for the hospitality and kindness shown to him during his stay in India. He wrote that "kindness of heart is innate in the people of India, as should be expected of the country of Mahatma Gandhiji. But I have met not only kindness but an old deeprooted spiritual culture, far more spread than in any other country I know of."

country and so you had some glimpses of it. I wish all of us would try to look for the good in others and not so much the evil.

I have read with pleasure what you have written⁴ of my fellow countryman, Justice Chandrasekhara Aiyar.⁵

I hope I shall have another opportunity of meeting you perhaps at greater leisure than we had on the last occasion.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

4. He had written that Justice Chandrasekhara Aiyar's qualities "as a great judge and a striking personality of deep culture has given me the greatest respect for Indian justice."
5. (1888-1957); Madras High Court Judge, 1941-48; member, Indo-Pakistan Boundary Disputes Tribunal; Judge, Supreme Court of India, 1950-53; Chairman, Delimitation Commission, 1953-55.

7. To Albert Einstein¹

New Delhi
28 February 1950

My dear Dr Einstein,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter of February 18. Need I say that your reaction to my book, *The Discovery of India*, pleased me greatly.² As an author this would have pleased me, but even more so it is gratifying that a man of your great eminence should find some virtue in what I have written and in the ideals for which we have worked. Unfortunately it is difficult to fit in ideals to reality and all kinds of forces and interests come in the way. But we have to struggle onwards in spite of these obstructions.

1. J.N. Papers, N.M.M.L.
2. Einstein had written: "I have read with extreme interest your marvellous book *The Discovery of India*. The first half of it is not easy reading for a westerner. But it gives an understanding of the glorious intellectual and spiritual tradition of your great country. The analysis you have given in the second part of the book of the tragic influence and forced economic, moral and intellectual decline by the British rule and the vicious exploitation of the Indian people has deeply impressed me. My admiration for Gandhi's and your work for liberation through nonviolence and non-cooperation has become even greater than it was already before. The inner struggle to conserve objective understanding despite the pressure of tyranny from the outside and the struggle against becoming inwardly a victim of resentment and hatred may well be unique in world history. I feel deeply grateful to you for having given to me your admirable work."

It was a memorable event for me to meet you at Princeton.³ I had long desired to do so and I shall keep that memory with me for a long time.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

3. Nehru had met Einstein on 5 November 1949.

8. To Hiralal Bose¹

New Delhi
March 13, 1950

Dear Mr Hiralal Bose,
Your letter of the 12th March.

There is no doubt that there is a great deal of frustration in our youth at present. Also there is no doubt that opportunities for constructive work of various kinds should be provided for. I entirely agree in what you say in regard to this matter. The real difficulty arises in how to do it and who is to do it. Almost every problem leads one to think of the human material available. In any event, every effort in the right direction is worthwhile.

I do not quite know what you wish me to do in this matter. You have my sympathy of course, but I would rather not be formally associated with any such undertaking.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

1. J.N. Collection.

9. To Papu Govindram Sadarangani¹

New Delhi
March 21, 1950

Dear Papu,²

I have your letter³ of the 17th March and, as desired by you, I am sending you my autograph on a photograph.

1. J.N. Collection.
2. A resident of Baroda at this time.
3. Papu wrote that she, her two sisters and mother were very unhappy as her father was in South Africa where Indians were not well treated.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

I am sorry you are having so much trouble and feel unhappy about the world. Every sensitive person feels this unhappiness today, because there is so much wrong with the world. Perhaps this is so not only in India but in other countries also. We are passing through a difficult period everywhere.

It is difficult for me to advise you, because I do not know anything about you and in any event it is not easy to advise any other person. One general principle, I might mention: happiness and unhappiness really depend to a large extent on ourselves. If we have peace of mind, then we can face the world's troubles without great difficulty. We can have some peace of mind, if we do our work and duty and not worry too much about other people.

This is a very unsatisfactory advice, I know. But I cannot say anything more at present.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

10

MISCELLANEOUS

II. General

1. The World Around Us¹

Dear Children,

Shankar asked me to write something for the Children's Number of his Weekly. In a weak moment, thinking more of the children than of the Weekly, I promised to write. But I soon realised that I had made a rash promise. What was I to write about?

I like being with children and talking to them and, even more, playing with them. For a moment I forget that I am terribly old and that it is a very long time ago since I was a child. But when I sit down to write to you, I cannot forget my age and the distance that separates you from me. Old people have a habit of delivering sermons and good advice to the young. I remember that I disliked this very much long ago when I was a boy. So I suppose you do not like it very much either. Grown-ups have also a habit of appearing to be very wise, even though very few of them possess much wisdom. I have not quite made up my mind yet whether I am wise or not. Sometimes listening to others, I feel I must be very wise and brilliant and important. Then, looking at myself, I begin to doubt this. In any event, people who are wise do not talk about their wisdom and do not behave as if they were very superior persons.

So I must not give you a string of good advice as to what you should do and what you should not do. I suppose you have enough of this from your teachers and others. Nor must I presume to be a superior person.

What then shall I write about? If you were with me, I would love to talk to you about this beautiful world of ours, about flowers and trees and birds and animals and stars and mountains and glaciers and all the other wonderful things that surround us in this world. We have all this beauty all round us and yet we, who are grown-ups, often forget about it and lose ourselves in our arguments or our quarrels. We sit in our offices and imagine that we are doing very important work.

I hope you will be more sensible and open your eyes and ears to this beauty and life that surrounds you. Can you recognise the flowers by their names and the birds by their singing? How easy it is to make friends with them and with everything in nature, if you go to them affectionately and with friendship. You must have read many fairy tales and stories of long ago. But the world itself is the greatest fairy tale and story of adventure that was ever written. Only we must have eyes to see and ears to hear and a mind that opens out to the life and beauty of the world.

Grown-ups have a strange way of putting themselves in compartments and groups. They build up barriers and then they think that those outside their particular barrier are strangers whom they must dislike. There are barriers of religion, of caste,

1. New Delhi, 3 December 1949, Nehru's contribution to the Children's Number, *Shankar's Weekly*, December 1949.

of colour, of party, of nation, of province, of language, of customs, and of rich and poor. Thus they live in prisons of their own making. Fortunately children do not know much about these barriers which separate. They play or work with each other, and it is only when they grow up that they begin to learn about these barriers from their elders. I hope you will take a long time in growing up.

I have recently been to the United States of America, to Canada and to England. It was a long journey right on the other side of the world. I found the children there very much like the children here, and so I easily made friends with them and, whenever I had the chance, I played with them a little. That was much more interesting than many of my talks with the grown-ups. For children everywhere are much the same; it is the grown-ups who imagine they are very different and deliberately make themselves so.

Some months ago the children of Japan wrote to me and asked me to send them an elephant. I sent them a beautiful elephant on behalf of the children of India. This elephant came from Mysore and travelled all the way by sea to Japan. When it reached Tokyo, thousands and thousands of children came to see it. Many of them have never seen an elephant. This noble animal thus became a symbol of India to them and a link between them and the children of India. I was very happy that this gift of ours gave so much joy to so many children of Japan and made them think of our country. So we must also think of their country and of the many other countries in the world, and remember that everywhere there are children like you going to school and work and play, and sometimes quarrelling but always making friends again. You can read about these countries in your books, and when you grow up, many of you will visit them. Go there as friends and you will find friends to greet you.

You know that we had a very great man amongst us. He was called Mahatma Gandhi. But we used to call him affectionately Bapuji. He was very wise, but he did not show off his wisdom. He was simple and child-like in many ways and he loved children. He was a friend of everybody, and everybody, peasant or worker, poor man or rich man came to him and found a friendly welcome. He was a friend not only to all the people of India but also to all the people in the rest of the world. He taught us not to hate anybody, not to quarrel, but to play with each other and to cooperate in the service of our country. He taught us also not to be afraid of anything and to face the world cheerfully and with laughter.

Our country is a very big country and there is a great deal to be done by all of us. If each one of us does his or her little bit, then all this mounts up and the country prospers and goes ahead fast.

I have tried to talk to you in this letter, as if you were sitting near me, and I have written more than I intended.

2. Madan Mohan Malaviya¹

Malaviyaji was an outstanding personality who piloted the country through difficult times and added dignity to his nation. Since my childhood I have had close relations with Pandit Malaviya and have been greatly influenced by his dynamic personality.

We often meet to commemorate the memory of our great men. But do we consider as to what are the tests of judging a man's greatness? In politics people shine temporarily and it becomes difficult to assign them their right place. Many of the names now well known will be forgotten after ten or fifteen years.

Mere speeches or slogans do not make a man great. Ultimately, a man is judged by what he does and what he is and not by what he says. If we apply this test to our present-day leaders many of them would be found wanting.

Nowadays, there is a lot of talk of culture. I know it is very important; it is the sole criterion of a country's or individual's greatness. Ultimately, it too is judged by how a country conducts itself or how an individual conducts himself in relation to other individuals. It should be inherent in everything that you do, in your talk, behaviour, relationship with neighbours and such other matters.

If you apply these tests to Malaviyaji you will inevitably come to the conclusion that he was truly a great man. It is men like him who have influenced Indian culture. In any world gathering his place is assured.

It is difficult to measure how much Malaviyaji did to mould us. People of my generation, particularly those in the Congress, know he did a lot. I belonged to his city, met him often and held frequent discussions with him. It produced a great impression upon me.

We have achieved our freedom after a lot of suffering and sacrifices. It is true that our sacrifices were diffused over a number of years. Before Gandhiji entered the political scene, a lot of spade work had been done. For more than thirty years, the freedom struggle had been going on. If you read its story now it may appear to you a very mild sort of thing.

Among young men there is a tendency to think that our freedom had been achieved easily. They do not seem to realize that we paid its price. They express surprise when they read of political struggles of the pre-Gandhian era. They have no experience of those times. Besides the foreign power ruling over the country, leaders in those days had to face an apathetic, timid and ignorant public. When people are ready to listen to you it is easy enough to lead them. But to work in isolation with all the obstacles against you is a much more difficult task. It is then that you judge a man's greatness.

1. Address at Town Hall to students of Banaras Hindu University on Madan Mohan Malaviya's birth anniversary. 13 December 1949. *The Hindustan Times*, 14 December 1949.

Even we had not much chance of working against those odds. Mostly we were working together. Among those selected few who worked alone against heavy odds and roused the country was Malaviyaji. He had a vision before him. Without caring for the hostile atmosphere that surrounded him he went ahead.

Successfully doing a thing is much more important than merely talking big. These days there is too much tendency to talk. People try to advise others what they should do instead of doing anything themselves. This leads us nowhere. With what little experience I have got I may tell you that by work alone advanced countries of the world have reached that position. Russia, America and Japan have little in common with each other. They have risen to their present position because people there work. Americans may not have very high ideals and may be materialistic but they do something—they work. They know how to work. In Russia and Japan they do not argue about a thing too much. They do it. In our country people argue about things instead of doing them. That is a dangerous thing.

When in 1929 Gandhiji placed the constructive programme before the country, many people laughed at him. They said spinning and weaving *khaddar* was not sound economy. But the fundamental thing that Gandhiji did was to tell the people to produce something instead of doing nothing. Unfortunately our greatest drawback is that we consider manual labour to be lowly. We want to be baboos.

In the U.S.A. and Japan, on the other hand, they strongly believe in the dignity of manual labour. In America an intellectual is suspected. The highest respect is reserved for a technician and skilled worker.

Pandit Malaviya too always laid stress on doing things. What he did is there for all to see. The Hindu University founded by him is a lasting monument to his creative genius. It is, however, difficult to assess all that he did to lay the foundations of true nationalism in India. He placed before us noble ideals. His shining face, and manner of speaking and action reflected his deep culture. Instead of merely praising him we should take a lesson from his life and achieve something.

3. Love and Confidence of the People'¹

I do not like this practice of giving birthday presents in the shape of big tomes which contain appreciations.² I speak from some personal experience, of not

1. Speech at the presentation of *Nehru Abhinandan Granth*, Delhi, 28 January 1950. A.I.R. tapes, N.M.M.L.

2. The preface of the book read: "It is truly a Birthday Book. Friends and admirers in and outside India have attempted to etch in broad detail the many qualities of head and heart of Nehru the man, and to integrate the life history of the subject into the freedom battle of India and its consummation."

receiving these tomes but of being asked to contribute to them. It is obvious that however truthful one may like to be one can hardly write with absolute truth for such a volume. One can hardly write a critical essay on anybody. It has to become just a selection of the good points of the person, or something that may be considered good. It is obviously not of much use in forming any critical estimate of the person. Ultimately it becomes and that is very valuable and very welcome a collection of messages from all friends and comrades. It, of course, may have some value. But it has no critical value. I have not seen what these books contain. I cannot say much about them. I think that it is embarrassing both for the writer and for the recipient of these volumes. It may be proper to do so in the case of children and youth but thereafter an attempt is usually made to forget the passing of years. The other day I suggested—it was about names being given to a national stadium or to a building for which the foundation stone ceremony was performed by me.³ We nearly escaped a disaster. They were on the point of giving it my name. Fortunately I came just in time to stop that. I said then, and I do repeat it very seriously, that this practice of naming buildings or institutions after living people, is in fact treating the living people as if they were dead. It is not a good way of dealing with them. Sometimes it is worth doing because the people whose names you use are big enough. But more often than not, the names of people who are not worthy of high esteem are used. It is very difficult to draw the line. Therefore, the safest policy is to treat the living as the living and treat the dead as the dead. We have to draw a sharp line between them. We should not treat the living persons as if we have to offer obituary notices about them. As it happens, my birthday having taken place a quarter of a year ago, this presentation is very much in the nature of a post mortem. For it is in connection with my birthday which came off months ago. Now we are referring to it and celebrating it. So I suggest for consideration that in future we might wait for a person's death, before we make any kind of memorial for him.

But I realise that friends and comrades who have taken enormous trouble in the last 18 months or so to prepare this volume are moved by affection and love for me. When that is the motive, of course, nothing can be said except to be exceedingly grateful for it. Many of those who are associated with this presentation and specially you, Sir⁴ who are presiding over this ceremony, have been colleagues, well, for a longer time than I can remember. In fact ever since I took to political work, Tandonji was there as a kind of an elder, about whom one had to take care, that one should not do anything which he disapproved, I do not mean to say that he disapproved of much because he is a very kind man at heart, I might tell you, and he is kind to even persons like me, who have often erred. When people say that we have worked together for forty years, forty-five years, it seems as if the

3. See *ante*, p. 359.

4. Purushottamdas Tandon.

history of an era that has ended is being written. Anyhow, whether you present a volume or not, there is no doubt that things come to an end, years go by and times change, and however much you may eulogise, the suspicion arises in one's mind that whatever I may have done in the past, I cannot hold the same place as before in this changing world of today. I feel that this suspicion is not in my mind alone but in everyone's mind in the world today. Times change, new people come in. However capable the older ones may be and we may appreciate them, they do become a burden and an obstacle. There is nothing more dangerous than for an individual to hold on to any position longer than he should. If he does, even the good things he may have done begin to dim. Anyhow, the burdens of every generation have to be borne by its own youth. If you try to drag in others to carry them, it may answer for a short while but it can only cause harm in the long run. We have to make an effort to change with the changing times because we will become freaks if we do not do so and put up barriers between us and reality. It is possible that this may be the result of advancing years. When one is young, there is enthusiasm, there are hopes and as a result mountainous problems look simple. There is no problem or difficulty which seems insurmountable. As one grows older, the world appears more complicated. Those who enter politics get entangled in a jungle and though they may continue to have their ideals and goals as before, ideals become mere glimpses like the rays of the sun in a dense forest. They are no more like the bright sunshine in an open field. So these doubts and difficulties arise and when old friends and colleagues get together and praise one, it is obvious that we feel happier. But with it comes the thought and the fear as to whether all this recounting of old tales is merely an attempt to infuse warmth and enthusiasm into tired hearts.

A few days ago—or rather a couple of days ago—there was a huge show in the stadium here. You might have seen what a splendid show and a joy it was to behold. I am sure you must have liked it. It was done very well with great discipline etc. But even while watching the show, the thought came to my mind that such parades were not common in the past. Much has been done and a great deal remains to be done. But we can truthfully say that we have fulfilled the pledge that we took. But that pledge contained the promise of other pledges, ideals and hopes. How far have we fulfilled them? But I do feel a little homesick, some longing for that state of mind which I had when I was behind the prison bars. My constant fear is that whereas once upon a time when we were often in jail, we looked beyond the prison bars towards the sky and the stars, now we may be imprisoned by our own mental barriers which make the stars and the sky invisible. This fear is constantly in my mind. I do not say that this is the situation only in India. The conditions of the world are very peculiar indeed. Tremendous events are happening and at the same time there is such narrow-mindedness, fear and hatred of one another, anger with one another, preparations for war against one another, constant

wars. This is the condition in the world today. Even in India, our minds are not very clear. If I have learnt a lesson from Mahatma Gandhi, it is that if our mind is clear and our work is right, then it does have an effect on the enemy—it weakens him and makes a friend of him. I feel that this is not merely a matter of high principle. You can gauge the results practically. At least this is what my daily life has taught me. People think that good work can only result in good, but if good is sought to be achieved by evil methods it breeds weakness and evil. Now it would be difficult to draw a line, to have a clear demarcation but evil has to be combated, suppressed, put an end to. All this is quite true. At least as far as the Government is concerned, it has to do that because if it fails to suppress evil, perhaps there may be no government left. But at the same time, I think it is a fundamental principle that evil should be countered by good and only then can evil really be exorcised and not by trying to counter it by evil. It only drags on the evil endlessly. Now, it is a different matter as to how far we can put this into practice in our own personal lives or even in our governmental capacity. But I have no doubt that the principle is very sound. When I look back upon the history of the last few years, I do not feel perturbed so much at what our enemies did or did not do, though we have to bear that in mind in order to be prepared for the future, as to what we have ourselves done. There is no fear of any danger if we are on the right path. But if we do not follow the right path, in spite of our best arrangements, dangers will increase.

So all these thoughts come to the mind. We must not become complacent. We will be making a big mistake if we think that now that we have achieved our goal, we need not do anything more. It will lead to our wasting all our energies in petty quarrels. There can be no one single goal, either in the life of an individual or a nation. The first and foremost goal before the country was to achieve political independence which we did and it was a big step forward. But we have never felt that that was enough. We have always invested the word freedom with many meanings. There is much more to be done and if we do not achieve our other goals, numerous other problems and dangers will arise. Therefore, the most urgent question before us is, as Munshiji³ also hinted just now, that we should not close our minds to the outside world and try to live our lives in various small compartments of States and provinces. As you know, we try to isolate ourselves in this way and think that our small world is the only reality. This is the greatest danger of narrow-mindedness. If we keep our minds open, we will be very strong and will have no fears. But if we deliberately erect a mental barrier, who can then save us? This is my great fear. We have always come out of other prisons bravely.

I have put some of my thoughts before you. I do not know whether they were quite relevant to the occasion. What would be appropriate for me is to thank you. Even that seems superfluous, that I should use some meaningless formal words when you have shown me such great affection. But I would like to mention that

3. K.M. Munshi.

in recent years, much has happened which has given me happiness. Then again, other things happened which disturbed and depressed us. But memory of one or two things have always infused fresh courage in me. One is the love and confidence of the people and second and more important, the affection of my colleagues—because so long as one's comrades are loving, any danger in the world can be combated. The most dangerous thing is loneliness. Therefore I thank you for the hard work that you have put in to prepare this volume with love and which has impressed me greatly.

4. Sarat Chandra Bose¹

May I, Sir, with your permission, refer to the passing away yesterday of a renowned Member of this House and one who played a noble part in the struggle for freedom in this country—I refer to Shri Sarat Chandra Bose. A member of a very distinguished family and a lawyer of eminence, he occupied the highest position in the organisations engaged in the struggle for freedom. He was a member of the Congress Working Committee for some years. He became a Member of this House and was chosen as the Leader of the Interim Government which came into existence in 1946. Later, on the political plane, he parted company with some of us and was one of our severest critics. But whether he was a critic or not, which he had every right to be, he has played an eminent role in the struggle for freedom and it is a matter for sorrow for us that an eminent Indian should pass away. At any time that would have been a matter for sorrow for us; but, at the present time, more especially when grim tragedy faces us in Bengal and when the voice of controversy should be hushed before this tragedy, both actual and potential, it is a great sorrow and regret that an eminent son of Bengal and of India should pass away.

All of us today are living under great strain because of the news that we receive from day to day of happenings in Bengal. The news that comes to us is often rather vague and, may be, it is often exaggerated. It is not always easy to check it. We try to check it, but nevertheless it is true that, however vague it may be, there is a substratum of truth in it which is very bad and very evil. And what is more,

1. Statement made in Parliament on 21 February 1950 on the death of Sarat Chandra Bose on 20 February. *Parliamentary Debates (Official Report)*, Vol. I, Part II, 28th Jan.-23rd. Feb. 1950, pp. 685-686.

the potentialities of the situation carry even greater evil. All of us, therefore, whether we are Members of Government or other Members of this House or members of the public, are greatly exercised and it is up to us to do everything in our power to stop the evil, to avert further evil. I hope soon, on a future occasion, to say more about the subject. But, for the present it has come as a shock to us that, at this moment when it is upto all of us, not only in Bengal but outside also, to combine together to face this tragedy and this evil, one great son of Bengal should pass away.

I would like you, Sir,—and I am quite sure the House will agree with me—to convey the regret of this House and the condolence of this House to the members of the family of Shri Sarat Chandra Bose.

GLOSSARY

achkan	a long coat
arti	worship with lamps
Bapu	father; Mahatma Gandhi was addressed as Bapu by Nehru and many others
bhoomidar	a landholder or owner
bustee	an inhabited place
chakra	a wheel
chaprasi	a peon, an orderly
char	alluvial land mass created by a river changing course
charkha	a spinning wheel
churidar	long tight trousers
hartal	stoppage of work
Holi	Hindu spring festival
Jai Hind	victory to India
jehad	holy war against infidels
kafir	an infidel
karma	fate, destiny, belief in past actions influencing one's life
namasudra	a community in Bengal
mela	a fair
patwari	a village accountant
rabi	the crop reaped in the spring season
rashtrapati	president
rishi	a sage
sanatanist	a follower of the traditional Hinduism
sanskriti	culture
shankh	a conch shell
taluka	a sub-division in a district
thana	a police station
tilak	a mark applied on the forehead

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This volume, the first part of the fourteenth volume of the *Selected Works*, covers the period from 15 November 1949, when Jawaharlal Nehru returned to India from his American visit, to 8 April 1950, when the Indo-Pakistan Agreement was signed. During this period, the Constitution was adopted, the Republic of India was inaugurated and a Planning Commission was set up. India confronted the problems of financial stringency, shortage of foodgrains, devaluation of currency, influx of refugees, communist violence and a revivalist Hindu militancy. The United Nations had failed to solve the Kashmir issue, and India and Pakistan moved to the brink of war as the communal tension in the two Bengals reached unprecedented levels.

Concerned at the growing weakness of ideals in Indian public life, Nehru considered resigning the prime ministership and battling in a private capacity for their restoration. The crisis was partly defused when an agreement with Liaquat Ali Khan was reached for the protection of minorities in India and Pakistan.

Distributed by
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

ISBN 019 563096 3

